

**CHAPLAINCY, POWER AND PROPHECY IN THE SCOTTISH  
PRISON SYSTEM: THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE PRISON  
CHAPLAIN**

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this thesis has been written by myself.

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## **ABSTRACT OF THESIS**

The thesis is concerned with the changing role of the prison chaplain in the Scottish prison system and includes an empirical investigation of the current role of chaplaincy.

The first chapter of the thesis offers some historical perspectives on the role of religion and the role of the prison chaplain at a time in the mid to late 19th century when the role of religion was a primary influence on penal policy and practice. The prison chaplain was regarded along with the governor and the medical officer as one of the 'superior' officers in a penal establishment and his influence was a major one. The chapter summarises briefly how the Christian religion and the role of the prison chaplain became important influences upon penal policy and practice as a possible way of reforming offenders and reducing crime.

By the early years of the 20th century, it had become clear that the Christian religious philosophy which had strongly influenced penal theory and practice in the 19th century had not been effective in the control of crime and the reformation of those who were imprisoned. So it was that the influence of the Christian religion in the penal setting, both in theory and in practice through the work of chaplains, became increasingly discredited. The marginalisation of chaplaincy began to occur and the second chapter discusses the possible reasons for this marginality within the context of developing social, welfare and penal reforms which took place during the latter half of this century.

Chapter three looks further at the role of prison chaplaincy during a period of disruption and crisis in the Scottish prison system in the 1980's and early

1990's. It summarises the causes and characteristics of the crisis, discusses the nature of the concomitant crisis which occurred in prison chaplaincy and how the Scottish Prison Service and the churches attempted to resolve these crises.

Chapters four and five analyse the results of empirical research into the current role and ministry of prison chaplains and how this is understood and regarded by prisoners, prison governors, senior management in the Scottish Prison Service and by church representatives. The results of the empirical research demonstrate that there is considerable uncertainty about the role of the chaplain among chaplains and that there is confusion about their role amongst prisoners, governors and policy makers.

In the light of the research, chapter seven outlines some new proposals for the future practice of prison chaplains and the final chapter offers a conclusion to the work.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CHCC	College of Health Care Chaplains
GIC	Governor-in-charge
HMCIP	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons (Scotland)
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
JPCB	Joint Prison Chaplaincies Board
MP	Member of Parliament
PDF	Prisoner's Development File
PO	Prison Officer
QC	Queens's Counsel
SACRO	Scottish Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders
SHHD	Scottish Home and Health Department
SPS	Scottish Prison Service

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of the changing role of the prison chaplain in the Scottish prison system.

The idea of researching into this topic arose primarily out of my experience of working with the prison chaplaincy team and as a prison chaplain in the Scottish Prison Service at HMP Edinburgh for ten years. When I began my research, I resigned from the Scottish Prison Service in order to guarantee the objectivity of the work.

I chose to write about prison chaplaincy for several reasons. My desire to write a thesis on this topic arose from the questions and issues generated by the many years I have spent in the company of those incarcerated in our prisons. Despite their criminal actions, which can never be condoned but may be understood, prisoners are marginalised men and women, the modern-day lepers of our society. They are forgotten people, locked away, rejected, vilified and scorned by others because of their actions. They are also relatively powerless because they are held captive and deprived of their liberty, probably the ultimate act of power against and over an individual. This can compound feelings of powerlessness in imprisoned men and women and their lives can be detrimentally affected as they try to survive in a system which is not as humane or healthy as it could be. If Christ's gospel has any relevance at all, then the prison is a place where that gospel can have its greatest meaning and application. So it is that the churches through their chaplains are called to be alongside these people in their powerlessness, and to offer a ministry of presence, healing, reconciliation and love.

I also believe that prison chaplains and by extension the churches, have a unique and important role within the prison system even though that role has changed dramatically during this century. As a prison chaplain however, it had become increasingly clear to me that chaplaincy from a national perspective seemed to be in an ongoing state of disorganisation with a lack of vision and direction. There were varying degrees of role confusion amongst many chaplains and I wanted to find out the sources and extent of this situation.

My final reason for choosing to write the thesis was because I had become aware that prison chaplaincy was an area largely neglected by writers and researchers. Contemporary literature in the penal field makes only rare references to the work of chaplains and there is very little written about chaplains from the Scottish perspective.

## **AIMS OF THE THESIS**

It has been my intention in this thesis to investigate the changing role of the prison chaplain within the Scottish prison system within the context of an evolving penal philosophy and practice. Through empirical research, I sought to understand the current practice of chaplains and to find out what models of ministry they exercised, what models they aspired to and any factors militating against the achievement of their aspirations. There were also some wider issues concerned with their work which I wanted to investigate, for example, the extent of their involvement with committees and groups in the prison establishments in which they worked; their wider involvement in prison ministry; the extent of their understanding of current penal policy and the extent of their communication with management and governors in prison establishments. In order to gain as full and clear a description as possible about



their ministry, I also wanted to ascertain how governors, senior managers in the Scottish Prison Service, prisoners, members of the Joint Prison Chaplaincies Board and representatives from churches understood and regarded the work of chaplains and which models of ministry they believed to be most relevant within the prison setting.

## **STRUCTURE AND CONTENT**

I used the following methods of research: historical and contemporary documentary analysis, a postal survey and semi-structured interviews with individuals and groups.

The documentary analysis included the study of historical material, in particular, prison chaplains' reports and governors' journals and the study of more contemporary reports, files and correspondence of the Scottish Prison Service, the churches and chaplains. The postal survey was sent to all prison chaplains working in the Scottish Prison Service. Interviews were conducted with a wide range of people - chaplains, governors and senior management of the SPS, church representatives and members of committees involved in decision-making on prison chaplaincy. Focus groups were also conducted with prisoners from a cross-section of prisons in Scotland.

The first chapter of the thesis offers some historical perspectives on the role of religion and the role of the prison chaplain at a time in the mid to late 19th century when the role of religion was still a primary influence on penal policy and practice. It was thought by the state and the churches that the influence of the Christian religion upon the lives of prisoners and their subsequent conversion to Christianity could reform them and thus reduce crime. Along

with the governor and medical officer, the prison chaplain was one of the 'superior' officers in a penal establishment and his influence was a major one.

Chapter 2 discusses the marginalisation of prison chaplaincy within the context of developing social, welfare and penal reforms which took place during the latter half of the 20th century. By the early years of this century it had become clear that the Christian religious philosophy which had influenced penal theory and practice in the 19th century had not been effective in the control of crime and/or the reformation of those who were imprisoned. The significance and influence of the churches in society also gradually declined. This resulted in prison chaplaincy playing a less important part within the prison system, particularly in the post-war period. This change in attitude and understanding brought about growing role confusion amongst chaplains.

In the 1980's and early 1990's, there was major disruption and crisis in the Scottish prison system and Chapter 3 summarises some of the primary causes and characteristics of this crisis. There was during this time, a concomitant crisis in prison chaplaincy and, after discussing the attempts made by the Scottish Prison Service to resolve the penal crisis, this chapter describes the attempts made by the Scottish Prison Service and the churches to resolve the crisis in prison chaplaincy.

In order to gain a better understanding of the current nature of the ministry of chaplains and to construct a factual and descriptive picture of the ministry of chaplains, Chapter 4 offers an analysis of the results of the postal survey. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with a sample of prison chaplains drawn from a range of prisons in Scotland who had responded to the questionnaire. The interviews sought to clarify some of the responses made by

chaplains and to discuss with chaplains some wider issues about prison ministry. The outcomes of these interviews are used in this chapter to illustrate and inform the analysis of the postal survey.

Chapter 5 looks at the way in which chaplains and their work are perceived by prisoners, governors and senior management in the Scottish Prison Service and church representatives. It presents an analysis of the interviews with a sample of these actors. The results of Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrate that there are different understandings and considerable uncertainty about the role of the prison chaplain amongst chaplains themselves and amongst prisoners, governors, policy makers and church representatives.

In the light of the historical and contemporary empirical research, Chapter 6 of the thesis offers some theoretical and practical proposals for the future practice of prison chaplains.

Arising out of my analysis, I put forward in Chapter 7 some normative conclusions and a series of proposals (see Appendix 5) for the current and future situation of prison chaplaincy in the Scottish prison system.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

# **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION IN PRISON AND ON THE ROLE OF THE PRISON CHAPLAIN IN THE SCOTTISH PRISON SYSTEM FROM 1835 - 1900**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter offers some historical perspectives on the influence of religion and the role of the prison chaplain in the Scottish prison system from 1835 until 1900. It summarises how the Christian religion and the role of the prison chaplain became important influences on penal policy and practice for most of this period as a way of reforming offenders and reducing crime. The chapter is largely based on secondary sources, in particular the work of Garland (1985, 1990) and Cameron (1983). However, it does make substantial reference to primary sources of historical reference, in particular to prison chaplains' reports of the period. Reference is also made to comparative historical sources from the English prison system.

## **THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AND PENAL POLICY**

Until the beginning of the 20th century, the Christian religion was a major influence on the direction of penal policy and its implementation in Scotland. The church regarded itself and was regarded by the state as the guardian of moral order and stability in society and it played an important part in the treatment of offenders. (see further Gorringer 1996:1-29, 225) Although penal systems have now largely separated themselves from religious influences and concepts, 'something of that earlier religious culture still remains and religious

belief has been an important force in shaping the practice and evolution of punishment'. (Garland 1990:203f)

The church and its teaching played an important role in the social and political life of Scotland, at a time when

the dominant ideology of British society...between 1850 and the 1880's was structured around three main supports - classical economics, utilitarian philosophy and evangelical religion (in various conformist and non-conformist forms) (Garland 1985:41)

These three supports sustained the 'values of work, thrift, respectability and...self help', which were incorporated into government policies and the practices of state institutions. Each person was thought to be free, rational and responsible, with the choice of acting for good or ill. This concept of the freely choosing individual was also prominent in the religious discourses of the mid Victorian period. (Ibid.:43)

Thus the doctrines of the Established Church specified that, though God was indeed all powerful, He had created human beings with an absolute freedom of choice in the hope that they would freely choose the Master. Even the societies of care and Christian charity, with all their experience of the forces and effects of destitution, chose to assert that individual moral choice was indeed the basis of social failure (and also the necessary lever of subsequent rescue work). (Ibid.:43)

So it was that people who committed crime were regarded by the state, the church and the law as being responsible for their criminal actions because they chose to engage in such activity. (Ibid.:43)

The state and the church were preoccupied by what they perceived as the breakdown of social and moral order amongst the lower classes through their anti-social behaviour - acts of larceny, sexual promiscuity and particularly

drunkenness were regarded as criminal. Control of the lower classes who committed criminal behaviour was required by the state and the ruling class in society and in this, the church and many of its clergy played an important part. Clergy, bishops and theologians underwrote the legitimacy of the ruling class and the dominant institutions of the day. This extended to a gradual involvement by the church in the way in which the state punished offenders. (Ibid.:40) The Christian religion was thought to be useful in upholding and strengthening morality in society, particularly amongst sections of the urban working classes where there was much poverty and a high level of offending. Punishment was meted out to offenders in the form of penal sanctions in an effort to reform their behaviour and make them conform to more socially accepted norms. It was believed that the possibility of redemption and reformation of the prisoner could only come through a period of imprisonment and through the grace of God. Before people could change, they had to experience conversion, in which the sinner knew God's forgiveness and was converted to Christianity.

William Sievwright, a scripture reader at Perth General Prison for thirty-four years wrote

The religion of Christ can alone provide a solution to the difficulties with which modern society is beset. The social problem in all directions, is, before all things a religious and moral problem. 'It is', says one writer, 'not the question of stomachs, it is quite as much, more perhaps, a spiritual question - a question of the soul. Social reform can only be accomplished by means of moral reform. In order to reform society, we must reform more and more in all conditions and relations'. If criminals by wise treatments could only be brought little by little to realise their personal responsibility, and by loving kindness where their hearts touched and opened to the crudest beginnings of a better life, the characters now shattered wrecks, ghastly ruins might yet by God's blessing be slowly rebuilt into the form of beauty by His transforming and quickening grace. (Siewwright 1894:306)

Gorringe argues that this kind of theology was idealistic in that such idealism

functions to direct attention away from the messiness and injustice of ordinary life to 'eternal' realities and truths. It puts a phantasmal object in place of the real human being. So the Christ of doctrine was far removed from the Galilean preacher, with his teaching about forgiveness, who mingled with the poor, and ideas about making up the number of fallen angels took the place of concrete attention to the miseries and oppression of the poor. (Gorringe 1996:6)

The theoretical justification for the use of imprisonment and the practical operation of penal regimes epitomised the integration of church and state, of pastoral care and custody. The prisons were full of people from the urban working classes, but most had little or no connection to or experience of the church. In many working class areas the church had found it particularly difficult to ground itself effectively in the lives of the people, particularly in the second half of the 19th century. (McLeod 1981:121) McLeod cites several reasons for this. He argues that working class people who migrated to the cities in search of work often came from the very poorest rural communities where they had already become alienated from the church; many parish clergy were appointed to parishes by local landowners; ever growing parishes around the country meant that parish clergy could not possibly keep in touch with their parishioners regularly; many factory workers had to work on Sundays and so formal church attendance often became limited to rites of passage or Christian festivals. McLeod argues that

judgement had no place in the popular conception of the after-life. As the saying was, 'We have our hell here' and eternity could be conceived of only in terms of sleep or of rest and relief...the whole scheme of sin, atonement, grace...had little place in the lives of working class people nor did the idea of a set-apart community of believers appeal to most working-



class people: it smacked of a desire to put on airs, or to curry favour with social superiors. (Ibid.:125)

Nevertheless, in an area where the influence of the church was arguably at its weakest, some clergy and church members felt drawn to the work of redeeming prisoners from their wicked ways and continuing this redemptive work on their release. It seems extraordinary that the church could believe that offenders would be able to relate to the church's desire for their repentance when it really had little or no place in their lives and consciousness. Yet many clergy and lay people believed that they had a mission to the country's prisoners, to show them the error of their ways and bring them to repentance and new life and this they attempted to do through prison chaplaincy, prison visiting, temperance societies, after-care societies and groups, ragged schools, industrial schools and hostels for the poor.

## **PRISON REGIMES AND CONDITIONS**

Scotland's prison regimes in the early to mid 19th century were developed from the example of the American penitentiary system. However, by the time the effectiveness of the penitentiary system was being questioned by American penal reformers the British government, believing the system to be successful in reforming prisoners, adopted many of the principles of the American penitentiary system in British prison establishments. (Cameron 1983:96) The penitentiaries had two systems of punishment in operation, the Silent and Solitary Systems. In Scotland some penal reformers including many clergy, favoured the Silent System where prisoners worked together in total silence and no communication or association was permitted between them at any time. It was thought that living in silence would give prisoners time to think about their



criminal ways and bring them to reformation. Other reformers advocated the Separate System which permitted work in cells, access to some books and exercise and which allowed prisoners to speak to prison staff. (see further Forsythe 1987:20-34)

Prisons in Scotland, prior to 1835 were under the direct control of local authorities. No national or uniform prison regime existed at this time. The situation changed after 1835 however, when the Prisons Act recognised the government's role as being more directly responsible for the oversight of prisons. Inspectors of Prisons were appointed and Frederick Hill became the first Prison Inspector for Scotland in 1836. In his first report in 1839, Hill highlighted the following areas of concern: the separation of prisoners, the lack of productive work and training, the lack of 'mental, moral and religious instruction', insecure buildings, the prohibitive cost of running and maintaining prisons, the lack of training for prison warders, dirty and airless prisons, the 'paralysing effect on the Administration of Criminal Justice, arising from the bad state of the Prisons' and the 'injustice of the present System, which often entails considerable Expenses on a small Burgh or County, in the Punishment of Offenders not residing within it, and for whose Crimes it is not justly accountable'. (Hill 1839) Hill advocated the uniformity of prison regimes and emphasised the need for mental, moral and religious instruction in prisons.

In 1839 the Act to improve Prisons and Prison Discipline in Scotland formalised the role of the church in prisons. Chaplains were to be appointed to prisons and from 1842, the religious influence in many penal establishments was a strong one. At the new General Prison at Perth, opened in 1842, the General Board of Directors implemented a uniform prison regime adopting the

Separate System as the most effective regime. Sievwright thought that this was preferable to the Silent System because

the fact of them being separate from each other is in many respects a humane and kind arrangement compared to putting them in association and then enforcing absolute silence by severe penalties. (Siewwright 1984:79)

Historical evidence about the regime at Perth prison indicates that conditions for prisoners were deplorable. The extreme loneliness and sensory deprivation experienced by prisoners meant that many men and women became mentally ill and attempted and in some cases successfully committed suicide. The journals of the governor at Perth General Prison from 1845 - 1855 reveal many instances of suicides or attempted suicides, sometimes two or three in one day. Prisoners who could not cope with the repressive regime were transferred to the Lunatic Wing of the prison. (Cameron 1983:104)

Prison reports reveal a repressive regime. The governor's journals from this period describe

the wretched frugality of the diet leading...to sickness, often exacerbated by hardship, poverty and neglect before admittance. The dreary work, frequent grim punishments, the harshness of solitary confinement and the extreme youth of the majority of prisoners resulted in many cases of suicide and insanity...Prisoners fell ill, died, and were buried within the prison precincts...Babies were either born dead, died within a week or two, or...survived the year during which they were allowed to stay with their mothers and then were sent outside. (Ibid.:103)

Discipline was maintained through the total exercise of power. Individuals were coerced into repetitive and monotonous forms of discipline, and punishments were given out to ensure training and correction (see further Foucault 1977). Punishments in prison were frequent and often severe, ranging

from being put in irons or in a dark punishment cell for up to seventy-two hours, or being put on a reduced diet. If prisoners were considered to be noisy and tried to speak with other prisoners, punishments were also warranted. From 1851 - 1853, it is recorded in prison reports that children as young as ten years old spent hours in punishment cells. Reports reveal that there was much unrest in prisons - destroying cell contents, using obscene language, and violence against warders

ten - twelve - and sixteen -year-olds spent hours in dark punishment cells. In 1853, one eighteen-year-old was repeatedly in trouble. In April he was given five days (three in handcuffs) in the dark punishment cell 'for destroying the dial and plate of a crank machine'. A few days later he got seven days for 'wilfully destroying the newly painted wall of his cell while at crank machine labour'. In May he had fifty-four hours in handcuffs and on third class diet 'for making a violent noise in his cell during the night and breaking the window'; in July three days for destruction of his cell; in October three days 'for wilfully injuring and taking sand out of a crank machine while at hard labour'; and later in the same month he was twice given three days and third class diet 'for throwing a jugful of broth in a warder's face'. This youth's continued misbehaviour illustrates the futility of the punishment meted out to the prisoners and the completely negative approach of those in authority. (Cameron 1983:107)

In Greenock Prison, which was apparently representative of other smaller Scottish prisons in this period (Ibid.:114), conditions were just as appalling. There was no heating or lighting and no exercise. The prison was damp, no personal washing was allowed, prisoners had to work on a crank machine because the cells were too small and badly ventilated for work to take place in them. There was a great amount of sickness in the prison including bronchial illnesses and an epidemic of cholera which swept through the prison in 1849. (Cameron Ibid.:116)

## THE ROLE OF THE PRISON CHAPLAIN AND MODELS OF MINISTRY

It was in these kind of prisons and in these kind of conditions where people were treated so inhumanely that chaplains worked. The first prison chaplain in Scotland was appointed as one of the superior officers of the General Prison at Perth when it opened in 1842. Prior to this date it appears as though chaplaincy provision in prisons had been scanty (Cameron 1983:65), whereas there had been chaplains appointed to some English prisons as early as 1774 (Howard 1792:28). Elizabeth Fry the English prison reformer and her brother, Joseph Gurney, touring prisons in Scotland in 1819 found the lack of provision for religious instruction and ministration worrying. Gurney wrote

How disgraceful is such an omission in a Christian country! and how extraordinary in Scotland, where the communication of Christian knowledge is, for the most part, an object of so great attention! (Gurney 1819:105)

The absence of religious ministration and instruction Gurney believed, made prisons evil places and he described Glasgow jail as

a fruitful source of very extensive evil...the jailer assured us that they uniformly leave the prison worse than when they entered it. ...of those who have been once committed, two thirds come back again. (Ibid.:75)

He also observed that, although there was seldom less than two hundred people in jail, there was no public worship or instruction. At Edinburgh Tolbooth, the situation was the same, although prisoners did receive a Bible on admittance. (Neild 1812:21) Some local clergy were working in the bridewells or workhouses. Only Aberdeen Tolbooth had a regular clergyman who worked there three times a week and in the Edinburgh and Glasgow Bridewells, a chaplain conducted a weekly service.

The first officially appointed chaplain at Perth General Prison was the Church of Scotland minister, the Revd. William Brown. He was assisted on a part-time basis, by a Roman Catholic and an Episcopal priest who were appointed to the prison as Visiting Clergymen. Their title demonstrated their lower status compared to that of the Church of Scotland chaplain and this disparity in status continued until 1988. This was in direct contrast to the status of chaplains in larger English prisons where, by 1878, the Roman Catholic chaplain held the same status as the Church of England chaplain. (Forsythe 1987:107) Roman Catholic chaplains were appointed in English prisons from 1864 onwards but there is evidence of anti-Catholic feelings expressed towards Roman Catholic chaplains by some of their Anglican colleagues. (McConville 1981:450) Like their Anglican counterparts, Church of Scotland chaplains were ranked next to the governor, his deputy, and the medical officer. William Brown's salary for forty-one hours per quarter, far less hours than those worked by the governor and medical officer, averaged £200.00 per year with a £10.00 increment per year up to a maximum of £250.00 plus a house and gas (Sievwright 1894:36) This compared with £450.00 for the governor, £200.00 for the deputy governor and £250.00 for the medical officer. His status and salary epitomised the major influence of the church in penal policy and practice

The chaplain is very properly made one of the most responsible and important officers of the prison; his salary is regulated, not extravagantly and, yet liberally, with reference to the number of prisoners; a pension is provided for him in case of sickness, age or infirmity. (Quarterly Review 1824:412)

Visiting Clergymen were paid within the range of £50.00 - 70.00 annually.

Prison Reports of the time indicate that the chaplain's duties were diverse and wide-ranging. He had to interview all prisoners on admission and provide religious exhortation and instruction to all prisoners. Chaplains were expected to help prisoners to reform their criminal ways by providing moral and religious teaching and preaching of the Word of God. Repentance was sought so that prisoners would be able to lead a life free of crime on release. Religious instruction meant that prisoners had to read the Bible and then be examined on their biblical knowledge. They had to be able to converse on religious concepts such as sin and guilt, and to commit to memory the Shorter Catechism, Psalms, Paraphrases and various excerpts from the Bible. (Prisons in Scotland 1845 Appendix 5:5)

Attendance by prisoners at chapel services was compulsory and it was expected that on Sunday, prisoners would attend one of the three services held in the chapel. Sievwright describes the Sunday morning ritual for prisoners at Perth General Prison

They [*prisoners*]...march single-file, each with his or her bible and hymnal in hand, being always kept at a given distance from each other for the purpose of preventing whispering and communicating &c.. They march along in their fustian clothes and bare heads with enforced quietness...within the chapel, the service is conducted very much after the fashion observed in any ordinary place of worship...Sunday services...are helpful, conservative influences in keeping alive within the souls, the sense of God, and the value and greatness of the human soul, of personal accountability, and of eternity, even in the feeble. Moral truths that keep alive a moral sense, that keep more from sinking more deeply, even if they do not immediately elevate, are powerful factors in the moral welfare of society. (Siewwright 1894:117)

Attendance by prisoners at the Sunday service was followed by religious instruction for three hours, two hours in the morning and one hour in the evening. On weekdays, prisoners were also expected to attend morning



prayers. Priestley (1985) argues that prisoners regarded their compulsory attendance at religious worship and instruction as disciplinary measures

Chapel...was just part of one's punishment. If one looked either to the right or the left or attempted to whisper to another fellow it meant three days' bread and water in close confinement. Chaplains, or at least some of them also did not hesitate to play an active part in this disciplining of their flocks. (Priestley 1985:93)

The chaplain at Warwick prison was seen

from the pulpit point out to the gaoler, poor wretches for unavoidably coughing, after they had been kept standing in the cold yard for nearly half-an-hour without their hats, in the winter season; and for which trifling offence they would be locked up in the refractory cell for a certain period. (Lovett 1876:237)

Prisoners were visited regularly by the chaplain, at least once every week. Chaplains would also visit the sick and those who were on punishment on a daily basis. Amongst other duties, the chaplain compiled detailed quarterly statistical analyses of admissions, re-admissions and liberations of prisoners. He was responsible for the education of prisoners, for teaching and appointing teacher volunteers, and he had to produce statistics on the standard of literacy amongst prisoners, on admission, during the learning programme and prior to their release.

## **MODELS OF PRISON MINISTRY**

Chaplains appeared to be practising a priestly model of ministry, regarding themselves as representatives of God in the prison, called to preach the Word, to lead the prisoners in worship and prayer, to celebrate the sacraments. Their ministry also extended to a concern for the moral and religious education of prison warders as it was felt that the whole ethos of the prison should be

permeated with religious teaching and example. (see further Forsythe 1987:113-136) They also fulfilled a pastoral role, though it is unclear from their reports, how sensitive and compassionate they were and to what extent they offered spiritual comfort. There are a few positive comments made about chaplains by prisoners who were serving sentences in the English prison system. (see further Priestley 1985:91 - 120) A prisoner wrote about his experience of a chaplain he had encountered at Newgate Prison in London

Without being obtrusive, he kindly and lovingly urged his great Master's message. How often have I since recalled to mind the many little acts of kindness, and the encouraging, really sweet words of comfort...I have received from him...'You must', said he, 'just consider yourself as a slave till your time is out...though your body is condemned to slavery, your thoughts, your mind, and heart are free to commune with God, free to pray, free to praise and free to repent. You may in after-life reclaim yourself and actually look back upon this very punishment as a blessing. (One-who-has-endured-it 1877:211)

Nevertheless, it seems clear from prisoners' accounts of the ministry of chaplains, that many chaplains did not appear to carry out their ministry as sensitively or as effectively as they could have. Prisoner Dr. McCook Weir wrote

It often happens that those who seek office in prisons, asylums, and workhouses have failed to obtain a hearing in the outside world, the assumption being that anything will do for prisoners, lunatics and paupers. (McCook Weir 1885:159)

Another prisoner wrote of the chaplains he met, 'three chaplains were certainly and palpably out of place in prison' and he described one as a 'terrible driveller'. (Martyn 1911:70)



Priestley argues that contrary to chaplains' reports, many prisoners claimed that they never received visits from chaplains at all

I am sorry to say that during my long experience in two convict prisons I never knew a chaplain voluntarily to enter a prisoner's cell and have a little rational talk with him about the good policy of honesty and truth. I am sure that not one of them ever came in this way to me. I never heard of one going to any other prisoner. (Ticket-of-leave man 1879:184)

There is no documentary evidence thus far available from Scottish prisons of chaplains practising a prophetic model of ministry in that they were able to maintain a critical distance from the power structures of the penal system and thus be in a position to reflect upon it. Annual reports by chaplains which are available reveal nothing in the way of advocacy on behalf of prisoners. There is no critical comment about prison conditions, inadequate health care, punishments meted out to prisoners or poor diet. This mirrored to a large extent, the non-prophetic role of most of their English counterparts

chaplains were not known for speaking fearlessly to the authorities...if he attempts...to win the hearts of prisoners, he finds the whole system of prison discipline arrayed against him. That discipline breeds and encourages the growth of every evil passion in the heart of man, and he, the chaplain, is part of that system; he lives by it, and he is not allowed to interfere with it at all events he never did so. When prisoners complained to him of some injustice or some cruelty, they got for reply, 'I am here to preach the Gospel and I can do nothing in the matter'. (Henderson 1869:115)

Many Anglican chaplains, Priestley notes

saw nothing fundamentally wrong with the system because, after all, it was only the logical application of the Mosaic Code in which most of them had been nurtured. (Wood 1932:29)

Linked to their largely non-prophetic stance, many chaplains did not seem to acknowledge the social and/or political conditions that could have contributed to criminality, preferring instead to focus on the sinful nature of individuals living a life turned away from God which they regarded as the primary cause of criminal behaviour. Prisoners were to many chaplains, sad and degenerate human beings, 'with a love of unrestrained indulgence in debasing vices; above all, to the moral darkness in which their minds are enveloped'. (Prisons in Scotland 1845 Appendix 5:7) Some chaplains regarded excessive alcohol consumption as a primary cause of criminal behaviour and their reports indicate their solutions to this. The Revd. Michael Bengher, Roman Catholic Visiting Chaplain at Glasgow Prison wrote

A number of those who pass through this prison have no particular criminal tendencies; their imprisonment is chiefly the result of excessive drinking. I have made it my especial endeavour with this class of prisoner, to instil into them principles of temperance and sobriety, and I insisted with them on the necessity, after their dismissal from prison, of joining Temperance Associations, which would be the means in addition of their becoming more zealous in their attention to the duties of religion. (Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland 1885 Appendix 28)

The Revd. Alexander of Glasgow Duke Street Prison thought that

mirrors which have been placed in the prisoners' cells have been productive of much good...The prisoners as a rule, make for them when they enter, and the sight of their bruised, thin, haggard faces is a revelation. Many a promise is made that they will not allow themselves to be overcome again with strong drink. (Annual Report of the General Board of Directors of Prisons in Scotland 1875 Appendix 23)

One chaplain however, expressed greater insight into some of the factors contributing to criminal behaviour

From the deeply rooted habits of intemperance and indolence which prevail among criminals in general, combined with the comfortless nature

of their so-called homes, their permanent reclamation is...a matter of extreme difficulty. Still it is gratifying to observe the public mind becoming gradually alive to the importance and utility of Ragged and Industrial schools - Institutions which are, I believe, well fitted, with the blessing of God, to prevent multitudes of our otherwise neglected children from entering upon a career of crime. (Inspector of Prisons for Scotland 1852 Appendix 6)

There is more evidence from the reports of chaplains who worked in English prisons of a recognition of some of the possible wider social and environmental factors which may have contributed to criminal behaviour. The chaplain at Pentonville Prison, the Revd. Kingsmill researched into the lives of five hundred prisoners and concluded that

total neglect or total inability to discharge the proper duties of parents, low neighbourhoods, vile lodging houses and the training which they get in the streets are quite enough to account for excess of crime. (Forsythe 1987:48)

Other chaplains thought crime was due to the cycle of poverty in that the people were trapped

the mind of the pauper child binds him to the workhouse as a home...associates it in his mind with the state of life attached to him and his destiny. (Jebb 1854:39-40)

Another chaplain, well-known for his critical approach to the penal policy and conditions of his day, was the Revd. W. Douglas Morrison, chaplain of Wandsworth Prison from 1887 to 1889. He described the prison as a place of despair

with its blankness, its silence, its monotony, its almost complete exclusion of the external world and its realities reproduce in a truly marvellous way the blankness, the deadness, the immobility, the lethargy of the prisoner's own mind. (Morrison 1896:256)

Morrison wished to see the introduction of a new type of penal institution which would replace the prisons of his time. He held a wider view on the causes of criminality than many of his counterparts. He thought that some prisoners had inherited weaknesses which were reflected in their poor physical condition and their 'low state of mental development' (Forsythe 1987:223) As a result, Morrison believed that many people who committed crime were actually physically and/or mentally unable to work. He argued that their inherited mental and physical disabilities deteriorated further because of environmental factors such as living in slum conditions. Morrison felt that for people to change, there had to be intervention before their behaviour became fixed and so he advocated reformatory treatment for juvenile offenders whilst also advocating that adult offenders whose behaviour he thought would never change, should undergo 'long and kindly custodial care'. (Ibid.: 223) He espoused social action against poverty and poor housing, promoted the benefits of good education and was vociferous in his view that the prison system should 'not inflict more suffering than strictly necessary.' (Ibid.:224)

For the most part though, from the language and content of their reports, it is clear that most chaplains saw themselves as superior officers of penal institutions, believing that their presence and work was intrinsic to the penal system and its discipline. They also genuinely thought that their primary task was to be engaged in vital redemptive work in Scotland's prisons, believing that their influence would help to turn prisoners away from criminal behaviour.

The Revd. William Brown wrote in a Report

Everyone who has been here for a period of six months however ignorant on admission, is more or less acquainted with the doctrines and precepts

of Christianity...the amount of religious knowledge acquired by the prisoners during their confinement, is very considerable. Many who, on admission were totally ignorant of the simplest truths of the Gospel, have now tolerably correct ideas of its leading facts and doctrines...A number of them, however...seem to be insensible of the impropriety of their past misconduct. (Ibid.:Appendix 5:5)

He continued that a term in prison

apart...from their associates, shut out from the world, and left to undisturbed reflection; having means of self improvement at command, access to the stated ministration of the Word, and the benefit of private counsel and exhortation, the Truth, militating against their principles, and habits, frequently arrests their attention, staggers their confidence in preconceived opinions, and...in some instances, appears to affect their hearts - causing them to look back with shame and regret upon their delinquencies...The general state of feeling among the prisoners is such as induces me to hope that a work of reformation is going on. The greater part of them admit the justice of their punishment, and profess themselves desirous of shunning their former associates, and of living soberly and decently for the future. The desire which they in general show for instruction - moral and religious - is certainly very strong. They are happy to receive information, at all times, upon any subject which has a tendency to promote their future welfare; and the progress which many of them make is truly surprising. (Ibid.:Appendix 5:7)

The Church of Scotland chaplain at Peterhead General Prison, the Revd. Donald Sutherland believed that a period of imprisonment was a positive experience. On answering a question as to whether penal servitude did any good to prisoners, he stated that the

reply on the whole must be in the affirmative,...It is however, too frequently the case that they are confirmed in crime and idleness before they are sent on to penal servitude, and the consequence is that they readily lapse back into crime and idleness when they are liberated. (Prison Commissioners for Scotland 1898 Appendix 39)

Another chaplain's report states

the progress and improvement in Christian knowledge of many who pass the ordeal of this Prison is an encouraging circumstance, and fitted to

induce the hope that some at least amongst them are enabled to say - 'Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord', a saving change has been effected. It is also to be hoped that in cases of those who may return to crime, these impressions will again be revived - instances of which are known to have occurred.. I do not remember a period, since I entered upon office hereto, when there was a more regular and better attendance of the prisoners on the Chapel Services than the present. They conduct themselves...with great propriety, and show at least as much attention as an ordinary congregation in any of our churches. (Prisons in Scotland Report 1852 Appendix 6)

Governors' Reports and Prison Commissioners' Reports up to 1870 confirmed their belief too that the chaplain played an important and essential role within the prison system. In 1848 a Report of the General Board of Directors of Prisons in Scotland stated that in every county prison, a chapel should be provided

because the Inspector of Prisons considers this to be indispensable...in every other prison, in addition to the Chapel, a suitable room should be provided for the Chaplain to confer with the Teachers, also with the Prisoners, singly; (Report of the General Board of Directors of Prisons in Scotland 1848 Section 2:1)

Chapels were built in the centre of prisons - a symbolic indication of the central place given to the Christian religion in penal practice.

## **THE 1877 PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT**

In 1877 the Prisons (Scotland) Act ensured that the prisons in Scotland came under strong, centralised and bureaucratic control. Local authorities no longer had any responsibility for local prisons. The Act ensured, over a period of time, complete uniformity of penal policy and practice. A body of Prison Commissioners administered prisons on behalf of the government. They in turn appointed governors, medical officers and chaplains on behalf of the Secretary



of State. Local authorities were then given the task of appointing Visiting Committees which would inspect prisons independently and hear any complaints made by prisoners. Their influence on the way in which prisons were run however, became very small. (Coyle 1991:80)

The first Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners in 1880 outlined the revised duties of the chaplain. He was to be responsible for the religious instruction of prisoners, for educational provision in prison, for monitoring the prospects and condition of liberated prisoners and generally for the moral aspects of prison discipline.

He engages to give punctual attendance for performance of divine worship at the prescribed hour. He is to take the superintendence of the arrangements for the moral training of the prisoners and for communication with the relations and friends of prisoners, and with prisoners themselves after liberation. (Prison Commissioners for Scotland 1880 para. 36)

The chaplain shall not converse with prisoners on the subject of the management or discipline of the prison, or listen to any complaints made by prisoners with regard hereto. (para. 38)

The chaplain shall be in general charge of the education department, and, subject to a reference to the Governor, the scripture readers and the teachers shall be under his direction. (para. 39)

The chaplain shall have the general management of the prison library, and may direct any of the teachers to assist him in taking charge of it. (para. 40)

In all cases, the Chaplain shall keep a journal, including...the date of each visit. The journal to be open to the Governor. (para. 42)

If, in any instance, the chaplain should think that the instructions of the Governor are inconsistent with the proper performance of his own duties, or with the observance of any rule laid down for his guidance, it will be his duty to communicate his views in writing to the Commissioners, appraising the Governor of his having done so. (para. 41)

After the 1877 Act, the Prison Commissioners took responsibility for fifty-seven prisons and a gradual improvement in penal regimes began to take place but the experience of imprisonment towards the end of the 19th century was still traumatic for those who were incarcerated. Frederick Hill, the Inspector of Prisons for Scotland wrote of the prisons he inspected in 1893, '...the picture that gradually unfolded itself before my eyes was far worse than anything I had anticipated'. (Hill 1893) The prisoner's head was still cropped, he still had to wear clothes covered in arrows, there was very little recreation, and more than seventeen hours were spent in cells each day. Very poor children were often given prison sentences for the non-payment of fines, even the dying were sent to prison. Sick and poor people were incarcerated and sentenced to hard labour even though they were weak and/or ill. Punishments were still harsh - solitary confinement, loss of privileges and/or remission and bread and water diets. If a prisoner was found to be in possession of a paper or pencil for example, he was punished with a period in solitary confinement. Many prisoners were also beaten by the infamous cat of nine tails should their misdemeanour be deemed to warrant this punishment. (Cameron 1983:138f.)

Yet the comments from chaplains in their reports indicate that they regarded prisoners as being reasonably content with the conditions in which they had to live.

One chaplain wrote

I have found them as a rule quite happy and content and frequently, and unasked, speaking with pleasure of the kindness shown to them. Of course, exceptions are always to be found in every possible condition of life, and it is therefore not to be wondered at if a few professional and chronic grumblers turn up, now and again, in general Prison. When complained to by prisoners, the cause of the complaint was either unjust



or trifling...but most frequently the pure or impure outcome of loose passions. (Prison Commissioners for Scotland 1883 para. 19)

The Revd. William Geddes, Roman Catholic Visiting Chaplain at Perth General Prison wrote

notwithstanding individual complaints now and again expressed to me, I believe that the prisoners under my charge have every facility given to them of enjoying all the privileges of their religion which I can offer to them. And I beg to repeat what I have stated in former Reports, that most willing and prompt assistance has always been given to me by all grades of officers in the General Prison, whenever assistance was requested on my part, or thought necessary on the part of the officers. (Prison Commissioners for Scotland 1885 para. 12)

A major report on English prisons in 1895, by the Gladstone Committee had little impact on the Scottish prison system. (Coyle 1990:90) This Committee highlighted the importance of the centralisation of authority and recommended a more rehabilitative emphasis to penal regimes: work in prison should be more productive, there should be less cellular confinement and regimes should be less severe. Penal practice should have as its primary objective, deterrence and reform. The Report also acknowledged that there were wider social factors contributing to crime such as poor education and housing and that such factors needed to be taken into account when devising rehabilitative programmes in prisons. The Report advocated

the replacement of hard labour machines by useful occupation, a reintroduction of some...of the serious moral purpose of early separation, stronger education and greater philanthropic aftercare endeavour, asserting in general that prisoners had been treated too much as a hopeless or worthless element of the community. (Forsythe 1987:224)

Chaplains were expected to exercise an important role in the area of moral teaching

The Gladstone Committee...believed that prisoners should be uplifted by morally earnest, reflective and knowledgeable discourses both by governors and chaplains and by outside experts on particular subjects. A major part of the endeavour was instruction in Christian truth and theology which again came to the fore and which was carried out by chaplains...(Forsythe 1990:119)

In English prisons, an association of Lady Visitors was formed with women from local churches visiting every prison where female prisoners were held.

Missions to prisons were also undertaken by missionary groups

a moral and spiritual crusade was under way in the prison system with newly reconstituted services, visiting choirs, courses of instruction, cellular visiting by chaplains and earnest philanthropists, teaching Christian doctrine (Ibid.:122)

More effective for Scottish penalty according to Coyle (1990:90) was the Report of the Elgin Committee of 1900. It was

to examine the provision made in Scottish prisons for the nursing and accommodation of sick prisoners...the sufficiency of the accommodation provided in prisons of Scotland for ordinary prisoners...juveniles and first offenders, and to what extent they should be treated as classes apart... the sufficiency of prison dietary...prison labour and occupations with special reference to the physical condition and the moral improvement and training of the prisoners. (Ibid.: 91-96)

Yet despite Coyle's argument that the recommendations of the Gladstone Committee had little impact on Scottish penalty, chaplains' reports about their work from the turn of the century to 1921 do reflect something of the strong moral influence and practice advocated by the Gladstone Committee.

So it was that by the end of the 19th century, there appeared to be a move by the state towards a more rehabilitative emphasis in penal policy and this meant that whereas the chaplaincy function in prisons was still accorded a very important place, the religious theory and practice which had once been so

important in penal policy and practice was as early as the 1860's gradually being considered to be ineffective in reducing criminality and recidivism. (Forsythe 1987:194). After 1865, in the English prison system

daily congregate chapel services were discontinued and replaced by the reading of prayers in hallways to prisoners locked in their cells; provision of religious literature was reduced; the weekly half-day of education ended and education relegated to the evenings; writing materials were restricted...(Ibid.:194)

In Perth General Prison, the effectiveness of spiritual endeavours by chaplains was also being called into question by the 1860's. (Ibid.:194)

It became growingly clear that the separate system alone

could not create permanent change in the offender...There were several reasons for this - if prisoners converted to the Christian way of life in prison, there was no real way of testing such conversion and that when exposed to the difficulties and temptations of life on release the apparent conversion and reformation would speedily be shown up as artificial. (Forsythe 1987:62-3)

It was felt that the success of the separate system in reforming prisoners might be mistaken because accurate individual assessment was hard to monitor and achieve. (Ibid.:62-3) It also seemed as if there were some prisoners who were not affected by the separate system at all.

Despite the gradual changes to the chaplaincy function in the prison system the number of clergy and lay people involved both in prisons and in the after-care of ex-prisoners increased. Chaplains' reports highlight the after-care work for ex-offenders by various church organisations including the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Sisters of Charity, the Prison Gate Mission, the Salvation Army, the Evangelistic Association and the Nuns of the Good Shepherd. The

Discharged Aid Society visited men in prison and also helped them to find work, clothing, food and lodging on release.

Chaplains still enjoyed a high status in prisons but the tenure of the office was changed by the Prison Commissioners for Scotland in 1900. It was felt that chaplains working in the system for long periods of time became disheartened and tired and that clergy should only be appointed for limited periods in order to alleviate this problem. It may also have been the case that, as the churches and prison chaplains' influence was seen to be not particularly effective in reducing recidivism and controlling the behaviour of the urban working classes who committed crime, the primary position and the tasks of chaplains in prisons were becoming slowly marginalised.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is clear from the content of chaplains' reports that they were an important part of the state's apparatus for controlling those of the urban working classes who committed crime. They were regarded as superior officers of the institutions in which they worked. They were given and assumed a rank and authority next to that of the governor and medical officer and they seemed to be firmly convinced of their right and their Christian duty to reform prisoners from their criminal ways through coercing them into attendance at divine services, through religious instruction and through listening to religious exhortation. The importance afforded to religious instruction and worship in penal establishments was generally high and all prisoners would at some time during their sentence, come into direct and regular contact with the chaplain of the prison in which they were held. The church also offered pastoral help to ex-

offenders through its various after-care organisations and societies in an attempt to

dismantle the culture of immorality, intemperance and promiscuity...recognised in the lower classes and to install in its place the values of self-help, sobriety, respectability and hard work. (Garland 1987:48)

These charitable Christian organisations and groups shared an allegiance to the dominant ideology of self-help individualism. Garland argues

...while this philosophy of self help might make good sense to workers in a situation of stable, secure employment, often with high wage levels and positions of authority over subordinate workmen, it would make no sense at all to the mass of unorganised workers and their families who periodically entered the ranks of the unemployed and the destitute through the effects of trade cycles and seasonal fluctuation. Nor could it impress those who lived permanently in a state of struggle as they tried to carve out an existence below the poverty line. To those classes...facing appalling housing conditions, bad sanitation seasonal and structural employment and frequent malnutrition, the notion of the individual in control of his or her own destiny was simply unsustainable, as were the notions of temperance, respectability and all the other symbols of the alien culture...the dominant ideology was incapable of winning over the poor, because for them it was impractical...Self-help individualism suffered the limitations of its class basis, failing to find any economic rationality in which to anchor its significance and sense. Moreover, the actual processes of moralisation and supervision whereby these values and principles were to be imparted themselves reeked of class distance and superiority. (Garland 1987:51)

Chaplains allied themselves with the state and its penal policy to coerce the imprisoned into leading lives on release which were morally acceptable to the dominant ideology. Yet from evidence cited in this chapter, it seems as though by the 1860's, the Christian religion was gradually being regarded as a somewhat unsuccessful tool in stemming recidivism or in changing people's behaviour to any acceptable extent. Prisons continued to hold an ever-growing population as more and more people were sentenced to imprisonment and rates

of recidivism increased along with pauperisation and demoralisation, 'a whole class of people were caught up in a relation of exclusion and repression that gave them no stake in the social system and every reason to oppose it'. (Ibid.:53) By the end of the 19th century, there was extensive unemployment and a chronic housing shortage which affected not only the poor but skilled workers too. (Ibid.:55) The state's solution to the problem was the emergence of welfare provision, housing improvements, medical care and unemployment relief. (Ibid.:56) The call for government intervention came from socialist groupings and from technicians, scientists and intellectuals. They called for, 'the professionalisation of government, the accumulation of expertise, the solution of problems by the application of reason and the creation of an administrative State.' (Ibid.:57)

The prison as a disciplinary institution had not deterred, reformed or reduced criminal behaviour adequately enough. Prisons were being thought of as schools of crime where impressionable young people who were imprisoned, could learn more about crime in prison and then indulge in more criminal behaviour on release. There was also concern about the prison population, its

feeble-mindedness...the health and physique of the prison population showed a very high proportion of 'degenerate' and 'unfit' inmates. (Goring 1913; Daily Chronicle 25 January 1894) The recognition of these large categories in the prison population led to further questions about the prison itself. Was it contributing to this deterioration? Was it an appropriate institution for this type of offender? Should it not attempt to provide restorative treatment? (Ibid.:63)

By the end of the 19th century

there was a period of crisis and transformation...centred around...the proper role and function of the state in relation to the economic and social spheres, and the condition and regulation of the lower classes...the penal complex, being a series of state agencies dealing overwhelmingly with the poor, was greatly implicated in the crisis...this two fold crisis was resolved

by the development of the welfare state and the welfare sanction.  
(Ibid.:65)

These developments had serious implications for the role of the church in prison and by extension, for the role of prison chaplains and it is to this that we now turn.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE MARGINALISATION OF PRISON CHAPLAINCY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

By the early years of the twentieth century, it had become clear that the Christian religious philosophy which had strongly influenced penal theory and practice in the nineteenth century had not been effective in the control of crime and the reformation of those who were imprisoned. People continued to commit crimes - the crime rate had decreased but there was a recorded increase in recidivism. The majority of those who had been imprisoned were not 'reformed', social control of the lower classes who made up the majority of the prison population had clearly not been achieved and so the influence of Christian religion in the penal setting as a form of discipline, control and reform became increasingly discredited.

This chapter does not intend to provide a continuous historical narrative account of prison chaplaincy but rather, will contrast the centrality of the Christian religion and the role of the prison chaplain in the mid to latter half of the 19th century described in the previous chapter, with their marginality in the latter half of the 20th century. Their marginalisation is placed within the context of developing social, welfare and penal reforms which took place during the latter half of this century. The first section of the chapter discusses the development of social and welfare reforms during this period. The second section describes the changing role of the church, particularly in the post-war period. The third and fourth sections of the chapter focus on penal reforms



which took place during this period and describe the growing penal crisis in Scottish prisons in the mid to late 1980's. The final section then describes the changing role of the prison chaplain during this period.

## **2.1 SOCIAL AND WELFARE REFORM**

Poverty amongst the urban working classes was still endemic in the early 20th century. (Forrester 1985:8) The dominant classes in society were apparently ignorant of the social conditions in which much of the population had to live. When the scale of poverty became clearer, the reaction amongst the middle and upper classes was to blame the poor for the situation in which they found themselves. Forrester argues that it was

a whole range of significant intellectual, political and church leaders who drew back the veil of ignorance, pricked their consciences, and led to their putting the provision of welfare and the tackling of the great social problems of the cities high on their personal agendas. (Ibid.:10)

Up to World War Two, welfare provision was fairly minimal and was only provided for temporary distress and hardship. (Ibid.:10)

It was purely palliative, making no pretensions to solve social problems or remedy social ills. It was experienced as humiliating and...punitive, and it did nothing either to solve the problem of poverty or to reduce the stigma of being poor. (Ibid.:10f.)

World War Two however, brought major upheaval to Scottish society. People's attitudes and values underwent enormous change. Family life was transformed, relationships were fractured or destroyed; many children and young people were evacuated from their homes; the pattern of working life changed; social distinctions were reduced; there were different leisure activities available to

people; there was a relaxation of moral and religious standards and people enjoyed greater freedom both sexually and in other ways. (Brown 1987)

People of different classes fought side by side, shared the same shelters, ate the same rations...the people hoped for a new kind of society in Britain, in which the welfare of the whole community would continue to be the dominant concern of politics. It was as if a tacit contract had been reached between government and people in exchange for the sacrifices for the war efforts, the government would ensure that the dark days of the Depression would never return and would devote some of its energies even in the darkest days of the war to planning for the new post war Britain...(Forrester 1985:13)

No longer did it seem as if the government of the day was allying itself with the dominant classes in society:

vested interests had been subordinated to the common good. Government had found a new role in mobilising the resources, human and material, of the nation for war...the State was seen as acting on behalf of the whole community, not for some sectional interests and, as a consequence, the whole understanding of the government was enlarged along with a conviction of the beneficence of state action. (Ibid.:14)

During the war years the Beveridge Report of 1942, recommended the completion of policies begun many years before. On the assumption that there would be a comprehensive health service, a system of family allowances and a commitment to full employment, Sir William Beveridge proposed that there should be comprehensive social insurance benefits in return for a single weekly contribution - a 'cradle to the grave' provision of sickness, medical, unemployment, widows', orphans', old age, maternity, industrial injury and funeral benefits. It was to be universal in coverage and would provide subsistence benefits for all.

The landslide Labour victory in the 1945 General Election ensured the further development of the welfare state. The government embarked on major social reform legislation, although after the first year, the pace of reform slowed somewhat. (Forrester 1985:23) Unemployment, for the two decades after the war, apart from an exceptional two million people unemployed in early 1947, was rarely above a rate of two per cent. There was a progressive programme of house building. Aneurin Bevan, the Labour Health Minister introduced the National Health Service Act in 1946 (*there was separate legislation in Scotland*). It was to be a service available to everyone

for society becomes more wholesome, more serene and spiritually healthier, if it knows that its citizens have at the back of their consciousness the knowledge that not only themselves, but all their fellows, have access, when ill, to the best that medical skill can provide. (Brown 1987:216)

The new health and welfare services offered vaccination and immunisation, maternity and child care, domestic help, health visiting, home nursing and the provision of ambulances.. The National Assistance Act of 1948 took responsibility out of voluntary hands for supporting the homeless and destitute. Bevan reported that the use of the poor house was at an end

a system out of keeping with the spirit of the times has now been replaced by a new conception of the community's responsibility towards those unable to fend for themselves either on account of adversity or old age. (Ibid.:217)

By the end of the 1950's, the welfare state was firmly established and people relied more and more on the state to provide them with social and health care provision. There was growing economic prosperity. Harold Macmillan's 1959 election-winning slogan 'You've never had it so good' reflected the spirit of the times for most people. Yet between 1953 and 1960, there was an actual

increase in the number and proportion of the population living in poverty. (Forrester 1985:45) Although there were improvements in standards of living, there were still substantial inequalities in income and wealth, employment and housing and the working classes still experienced inequality and injustice in a sharply divided society.

The gap between the social classes with respect to infant mortality, educational progress, economic resources, working conditions, and ill-health remained as wide as it had ever been. (Pope 1986:199)

## **2.2 THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN SOCIETY**

According to Forrester, much church thinking in the 1930's and early 1940's moved

towards an endorsement of the project of building a welfare state in post war Britain...The Christian conscience had been touched by the destitution of the Depression and the hopes of the war period. Churchmen and theologians saw themselves as having a responsibility to contribute to the debate about the future shape of Britain and mobilize church opinion to support certain lines of social reform. (Forrester 1985:42f.)

He continues

The churches were in the 1940's socially comprehensively and politically influential...and they were able to mobilize wide support behind the idea that post-war Britain should be a compassionate and fraternal society in which equality found far fuller expression than it had in the past. (Ibid.:42)

As the welfare state emerged and developed, the role of the church in society continued to change. No longer were the church and its agencies the chief providers of care in society

The various roles of the church in the public arena - as sustainer of visions, custodian of the nation's conscience, planter of values, chaplain to the powerful, legitimator of policies, prophetic critique...declined after World War Two. (Ibid.:26)

People still attended church at the end of the second world war but the war had 'seriously retarded the already slow growth of the first part of the century'. (Brown 1987: 212; see further Davie 1995:31)

The church seemed unable to adapt itself to the needs and wants of the post-war generation. Although the extent of religious observance was still high, people were not so attracted to organised and institutionalised religion as they once had been, and this was particularly true of young people. People did not look to God or the supernatural for spiritual solace, reassurance and salvation in the same way they once had. Wilson (1982) argues that '...the supernatural plays no part in the perceived, experienced and instituted order...(Wilson 1982:162) and 'the modern system leaves no space for a conception of ultimate salvation'. (Ibid.:174)

The Church found it difficult to change itself or reshape its message, structure, liturgy and activities to a new post-war culture. It continued to be 'clergy dominated, hierarchical in structure and organisationally inflexible'. (Northcott:1994:4) Grace Davie argues that it tried

...to put back what had been destroyed and to rebuild the ...past... The gradual realisation that the older order could not be rebuilt and that a majority in the nation remained very largely indifferent to what was going on in the churches required a very different type of response. (Davie 1995:32)

People needed a theology and ethic to help them make sense of a new world (Cox 1965:107) and the church could not offer this to them. It offered an

outdated ecclesiology and a traditional form of religion which no longer appealed to the mass of people in society. (Northcott 1994:4) The language of welfare and social reform had once been the kind of language expressed by the churches but was now expressed by the state through its welfare agencies. Religious pressures and ethics became subsumed in a secular welfare morality and the churches' visible role becomes increasingly hazy. (Brown 1987:232)

By the mid to late 1950's new forms of leisure and culture also undermined the role of religion in society and as a focus in urban community life. The increased use of radio and television coupled with growing car ownership and other communal activities, such as bingo, dancing, cinema-going and social drinking held away from church buildings, were considered by the churches to be major factors contributing to the decline in church attendance and religious interest. Brown argues that the churches could no longer

provide the comfortable surroundings nor the form of activities which the post war generation came to expect, and the churches found that their activities just could not attract families on a regular basis. (Brown 1987:225)

The 1960's saw traditional Christian values as espoused by the churches being questioned by many people and the churches were 'abandoned by increasing numbers'. (Davie 1994:33) Davie argues that the churches tried to present themselves and their message as modern and relevant in several ways

in the theological and moral debates of the period...organisationally in the rearrangement of parishes, priests and people...liturgically, in the 'modernizing' of scripture and worship...and ecumenically in a variety of endeavours towards greater ecclesiastical collaboration... (Ibid.: 34)

New forms of ministry were introduced - urban industrial mission, community ministry and team ministries. (Northcott 1994:4) The churches had become more interested in developing and promoting other more visible forms of ministry but ministry to prisons was not one of them. Widespread indifference to the churches remained the norm amongst the population (Davie 1995:38) but there was a growing interest amongst many people in the sacred, 'sometimes in unconventional forms'. According to Davie

one underlying trend remains throughout the post war period...the failure of the mainline (that is, most Christian) religious organisations to maintain regular contact with the majority of people in this country...On the other hand, less conventional forms of religiosity have increased in the same period and even within the mainline churches new ways of affirming the sacred have been discovered. (Ibid.:43)

## **2.3 PENAL REFORM**

The introduction of reforms in the criminal justice and penal systems accompanied the emerging welfare reforms. By 1914 various new sanctions had been introduced into the criminal justice system such as probation orders, borstal training, preventive detention, detention in inebriate reformatories, detention in institutions for the mentally defective, licensed supervision and supervised fines. (Garland 1985:19) A national probation service was established and the after-care of offenders became organised on a national basis, replacing to a large extent the work of the churches and other charitable agencies in this area. The 1930's saw the introduction of new forms of specialist expertise to the penal system - criminology, social work and probation, psychiatry and psychology. As the move to a new understanding of human behaviour and its determinants emerged (Garland 1985), Garland argues



that the previous spiritual notion of the soul as a point of creativity and choice was rejected.

So it was that many of the duties and concerns of the church through its prison chaplains were gradually replaced by what the state regarded as other more effective forms of control of the urban working classes who committed crime.

The basis of crime no longer lay in sin or in faulty reasoning, but in an aberration or abnormality of the individual...the process of reform no longer attended upon the visitation of God's Grace or the return of true reasoning but mobilised its own positive techniques of intervention and human transformation. (Garland 1985:79)

Religion had previously been used by its prison chaplains as a form of social control in penal policy. The sociologist Bryan Wilson highlights this alliance between church and state

...this concept of sin...was built into a system of social control in which the Church's concern with the moral behaviour of man was...associated with the demand of secular authorities for obedience and social order. What the church defined as sinful acts, the secular authorities regarded as illegal acts, and individuals were faced with the prospect of public punishment for such acts as well as needing to maintain self control by the burden of an inculcated sense of guilt. (Wilson 1982:85)

The new techniques centred on the use of scientific and technical methods rather than the religio-moral concepts of the 19th century. It was now believed that the new methods of intervention and control would produce more positive and tangible results in the treatment of criminal behaviour and recidivism. (see further Rothman 1983:106f.)



## **Criminology**

One of the new methods was criminology which used scientific methods of research and analysis in order to understand the motivation behind criminal behaviour.

The prison provided...the kind of experimental laboratory...in which the new knowledge could develop...Criminals...could be examined, measured, photographed and catalogued in an organised and rigorous manner. It produced statistical data on conviction rates, recidivism patterns and criminal careers...It even allowed a degree of experimentation, in so far as various regimes of labour, diet, discipline and...could be compared with one another to assess the effects of each upon the prison population and the causes of crime. There was a natural link between the prison as an institution that sought to deter and reform offenders and a knowledge that posed the question of what an offender is. (Garland 1985:82)

Those who offended were treated as objects to be studied and understood and their criminal behaviour eradicated through the application of scientific methods and techniques.

Whereas the old system had punished the criminal for having 'chosen' crime and then had to set him free to make the same choice again, the new criminology aimed to remove his criminality once and for all. (Ibid.: 95)

## **Social Work and Probation**

Social work and probation, another new form of expertise, gradually replaced what had been regarded as the indiscriminate giving of aid by the churches and other charitable agencies to the poor and the destitute in the previous century. (Garland 1985:115) The objective of social work was to target those most in need of intervention and correction - the poor, the sick, those without work and the elderly, (Ibid.:116) and it also addressed the problem of criminal behaviour. It set out to

alleviate personal and social problems...seeking to enhance the quality of life of individuals, families and communities. Social work is rooted in the belief that the origins of personal and social problems, including criminal behaviour, may be found not only in the exercise of individual choice but also in factors over which the individual has no control...social work is based on a body of knowledge, skills and experience. (SHHD 1994:4, 7; see further Mayer 1983:17f.)

### **The Rehabilitative Ideal**

The crime rate began to rise after the war years (Ryan 1983:8) but the 1945 Labour government considered that this was a temporary phenomenon, symptomatic of the fact that some very poor people had been driven to commit crime through economic necessity.

The Welfare State which Labour was building...was going to get rid of this pressure. In a society where all had sufficient, the need to resort to crime must surely be lessened. (Ibid.:10)

Yet crime continued to rise through the 1950's and more and more people were being sentenced to prison. The state believed that offenders had to be dealt with more effectively so that the cohesion and stability of society could be ensured. Pattison in his discussion of the interventionist state argues that

The State used ideological, medical and welfare means..., presented as 'care' to ensure desirable behaviour and attitudes amongst the population. (Pattison 1994:88)

The increased use of welfarist disciplines in the penal field, a developing interest by the state in the rehabilitation of offenders in response to the rising crime rate and the fear of social instability were translated into penal practice. The 'Treatment Model' emerged from the alliance between the state and

professionals from the social and psychological sciences who were 'deemed to be scientific, professional and neutral'. (Ibid.:92) Wood argues that

Crime and criminals could be 'treated'. The important notions were - pathology, causation, and cure. These needed investigation, expert assessment and diagnosis. Then you applied the appropriate individualist treatment, and left it to the experts to decide when it had 'worked'. (Wood 1991:58)

It was argued that offenders should be given every help possible so that they did not reoffend. This shift to secular control of the previous activities and functions of religion in the penal field became a major shift.

By the 1960's welfare units became an important part of prison organisation with responsibility for assisting prisoners with their domestic, marital, personal and employment problems. Andrew Coyle observes that in the 1960 *Prisons in Scotland Report* it was stated that

Governors reported that relief from anxiety rendered prisoners amenable to prison discipline and training. This relief and the details supplied by welfare officers as to prisoners' circumstances and requirements also helped officers responsible for aftercare on release in their efforts to secure a lasting rehabilitation. (Coyle 1991:106)

This new language of care for and rehabilitation of prisoners was expressed in annual *Prisons in Scotland Reports*, the following excerpt typical of the direction of penal practice at the time

positive and forward looking steps have been taken in the treatment of inmates...many young persons find themselves undergoing custodial sentences because of their inadequacy or inability to relate to and live within the normal community. For many this arises from a feeling of being unwanted or misunderstood. These factors do not excuse the offences...but it seems appropriate that part of their training should be

directed towards their reintegration...with the community which they feel has rejected them. Most of society's social problems have their counterpart in the penal community. Prisoner's problems were identified as having existed long before imprisonment and a jail sentence merely produces additional anxieties and identifies social needs. The Prison Welfare Officer is there to overcome social isolation by providing an additional channel of communication with a wife, family or social agency...continuing contact may be expected to...inculcate changed attitudes and bring prisoners and inmates to view realistically the difficulties that will confront them on release, at the same time encouraging them...to take an active part in resolving their present problems as well as planning for their future. (SHHD 1969 7:99)

## **2.4 THE GROWING PENAL CRISIS**

### **The Mountbatten Inquiry**

In 1966, the Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, set up a Committee of Inquiry under the chairmanship of Lord Mountbatten to investigate and report on prison escapes and security. A number of high security prisoners had escaped from English prisons in the mid-1960's and the Inquiry was held to investigate the escapes and the wider question of prison security. The Mountbatten Report (1966) was primarily concerned with the prison system in England and Wales but many of its recommendations were also put into practice in the Scottish penal system. The main recommendation of the Report was that prisons should heighten security and continue with rehabilitative programmes. Yet Bean writes

If prisons were not reforming people then it was assumed that they were punishing people...The Mountbatten Report...in spite of its claims to serve both aims...wanted new administrative machinery which would...reduce the treatment experts' role and place it firmly below that of security. (Bean 1973:127)

The result of the Mountbatten Report in practical terms was a greater emphasis on security in prisons and on the

increasing classification and segregation of prisoners...Since the Mountbatten Report, 'security and control' has become the standard response to explain every feature of prison life. (Fitzgerald and Sim 1982:21)

Prisoners were now to be allocated a security category ranging from Category A for high security prisoners to Category D for low risk offenders. This tightening up of prison regimes with a strong emphasis on security found much public support as people reacted to the increasing crime rate and the alleged permissiveness of the 1960's.

### **Unrest in Scottish prisons**

During the 1970's, the daily prison population in Scotland rose to over 5000 people. (Cameron 1983:201f.) Overcrowding had become a serious problem and prisoners took part in rooftop protests and other forms of rebellion in Scottish prisons. Government plans to build new prisons and develop other services, particularly social work and education within the penal system, had to be deferred due to increasing government financial constraints. The recruitment and secondment of social workers by Regional Council Social Work Departments to the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) was limited and consequently welfare units were seriously understaffed. The rhetoric of 'Treatment and Training' was still prevalent but its practice less widespread. Prison conditions were deteriorating and there were allegations by prisoners of prison officer brutality. Prisoners were becoming more hostile and vociferous in their protests and the situation was particularly volatile at Inverness and

Peterhead prisons. At HMP Inverness, the SPS had established a unit in 1966 to segregate prisoners whose behaviour was regarded as disruptive in the mainstream prison system. Conditions for prisoners held in this unit were very basic with few facilities and they experienced near solitary confinement.

Jimmy Boyle who was held there describes the unit in these terms

Inverness was the Siberia for prisoners who rebel in other Scottish prisons. With the structure of a punishment cell, there was a barred cage inside a concrete cell. It was here that a human being had to live...isolation, loneliness and despair...The most important fact of all is the individual's total helplessness...My whole being was getting crushed and I was fighting the forces with every ounce of strength in me. (Boyle 1982:65)

and further

The caged area is approximately 9 ft. by 6 ft.. The only moveable objects besides the human body are a small plastic chamber pot - lidless, a woollen blanket and one book that is issued each week. Human contact is made three times a day when the 'screws' enter to search the body of the prisoner. His mouth, armpits, anus and the soles of his feet are searched each time even though he could not have left the cell between searches. This humiliation and degradation takes places daily. There is no communication between the 'screws' and the prisoners. He is alone and at the complete mercy of the 'screws' who take full advantage of his helplessness. Brutality and abuse of human rights is rife. If a prisoner is particularly awkward then punishments take the form of leaving his food just out of reach behind the cage bars until it is cold, or he receives it with spittle in it. (Boyle 1978:23-4)

Some prisoners were held in these conditions for periods of up to four years.

In 1972 there was a riot at the Inverness Unit and it was closed until 1978 when it was reopened, remaining in use until 1990. At Peterhead prison, a maximum security prison holding those who were considered by the SPS to be the most

violent prisoners in the Scottish prison system, there were major incidents throughout the 1970's. Peterhead was an isolated and harsh prison with a repressive regime and prisoners held there, received more punishments per head of the prison population than in any other prison in Scotland (Coyle 1994:96) There was a high level of physical violence, allegations of prison officer brutality, denial of privileges and coercion of prisoners by staff. Prisoners lived like caged animals, many had lost all sense of hope for the present and the future, the atmosphere was unrelentingly tense for prisoners and staff alike. In all prisons in Scotland, prison officers threatened to strike and it was believed by SPS management and the government that there could be a serious risk to security through a loss of control. In Edinburgh prison, remand prisoners were expected to share cells with two other prisoners, they were locked up for twenty-three hours each day with only chamber pots to urinate and defecate into and the standards of hygiene were well below an acceptable level. There were shortages of staff, work and funds throughout the system. (Cameron 1983:201)

### **The May Report**

In 1978, the Home Secretary, Merlyn Rees, announced the establishment of an Inquiry into the prison system in the United Kingdom under the chairmanship of Lord Justice May, to examine the organisation and management of the prison system, prison conditions and the structure, pay and conditions of staff. Rees was responding to growing public disquiet about rising crime and delinquency, staff unrest, an increasing level of disorder in prisons and the need to assess the '...measures needed to care for and control those committed to custody by the courts'. (HMSO 1977:1)



The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into UK Prison Services (The May Report 1978) conceded that the prison system was in a state of crisis. The Report drew attention to the problems caused by overcrowding, recommending that the prison building programme should be extended in order to reduce overcrowding and improve conditions for prisoners and staff. It also recommended alternatives to imprisonment for some categories of offenders, particularly petty offenders, as a solution to reducing the prison population. It was highly critical of prison conditions, advocating that HMP Peterhead should be 'substantially redeveloped' and that cell sharing in all prisons should be eliminated with integral sanitation installed for the use of prisoners. It reported that prisoners were unevenly distributed in prisons and, most importantly for the immediate future of penal policy, the Report stressed that the primary objective of imprisonment should be 'positive custody' (The May Report 1979 para. 4.26). It recommended that Rule 1 of the Prison Rules should be rewritten and the Committee suggested the following replacement:

The purpose of the detention of convicted prisoners shall be to keep them in custody which is both secure and positive, and to that end the behaviour of all the responsible authorities and staff towards them shall be such as to:

- (a) create an environment which can assist them to respond and contribute to society as positively as possible;
  - (b) preserve and promote their self respect;
  - (c) minimise, to the degree of security necessary in each particular case, the harmful effects of their removal from normal life;
  - (d) prepare them for and assist them on discharge;
- (para. 4.26)

The Report also made recommendations about the role and training of prison staff, their pay and industrial relations. The government of the day was less than enthusiastic about the Report's findings and recommendations. Coyle quotes from the editorial of *The Scotsman* newspaper



This traditional public indifference to what goes on inside prisons (except when prisoners are alleged to be pampered) no doubt helps to explain why Mr. Whitelaw [*the Home Secretary*], while he jumped into immediate acceptance of the pay recommendations of the Inquiry, was much more cautious about the prison building and prison reform programmes that were simultaneously recommended. (Coyle 1991:123)

### **The collapse of the rehabilitative ideal**

The key recommendations of the May Report effectively meant that the rehabilitative model of 'treatment and training' was coming to an end. It was to be replaced with the concept of 'positive custody' (para 4.27). The Report said

positive custody has to be secure and it must carry out all the intentions of the courts and society, in that respect. On the other hand, penal establishments must also so far as possible be hopeful and purposive communities and not be allowed to degenerate into mere uncaring institutions dulled by their own unimaginative and unenterprising routines. (para. 4.46)

The rehabilitative ideal had presented itself as a rational alternative to punishment, and it had focused its efforts on treating the individual and his/her problem, but the reality was that due to financial constraints, only a minority of prisoners had actually received 'treatment and training' and the philosophy had not been wholeheartedly embraced by prison governors and discipline staff. The May Report acknowledged that prison officers were openly resentful of probation officers and social workers/welfare staff

identifying both the philosophy behind welfare and the welfare workers themselves as sympathetic to prisoners, and likely to line up with prisoners against them. Welfare workers are seen as concerned only with prisoners' interests and hostile to the custodial role of officers. (Fitzgerald & Sim 1982:137)

'Treatment' had been largely enforced with specialists deciding what was best for individuals. The decline of organised religion and its concomitant Christian moralism in the prison setting had simply been replaced by other individuals and specialists who also made a series of moral judgements about people. The Treatment Model attempted to alter prisoners' world views and to inculcate largely middle class values into people with different value systems. This is acknowledged in the 1969 *Prisons in Scotland* Report which commented that

Recent developments in the penal field have emphasised the need to collate...information concerning the home, education, employment record, special skills and social attitudes, so that some assessment may be made on the nature of the problems which may effect allocation, training and eventual return to society...Continuing contact may be expected to...inculcate changed attitudes and bring inmates to view realistically the difficulties that will confront them on release, at the same time, encouraging them...to take an active part in resolving their present problems as well as planning for their future. (SHHD 1969 para. 7:101)

The Treatment Model did not address in a wholly effective way the social, economic and environmental factors which may have contributed to criminal behaviour.

The implementation of some of the recommendations of the May Report within the SPS meant that regimes inside prisons became increasingly repressive, there was an increased use of classification, prisoners were segregated into more special units and new security techniques were developed to control the imprisoned population. (Fitzgerald and Sim 1982:22) The impact of revised security considerations gradually permeated all areas of prison life

including the availability of visiting, recreational, association and education facilities, the reduction in outside working parties and stricter control and surveillance, not only on the external prison walls and perimeter fences, but within the prison wings and on the cell landings. (Ibid.:22)

The state did not embark on a new prison building programme and the May Report reinforced the government's intention to change direction in penal policy. The criminal was to be considered a morally responsible individual who committed crime through rational choice, not because he was sick or inadequate. (Ryan 1983:46) The punishment therefore should fit the crime

The rehabilitative ideal, the notion that many offenders are unanswerable for their actions but ill and in need of treatment was directly at odds with the new emphasis on personal moral responsibility which held that offenders should be made accountable for their crimes and punished accordingly. (Ibid.:46)

### **The vacuum in penal policy**

The gradual collapse of the rehabilitative ideal saw a vacuum in penal policy. (see further Adler and Longhurst 1994:214-217; Kinsey 1988:103-122) With no clear philosophy and policy, the Scottish Prison Service was in a growing state of crisis by the early 1980's. In 1980 the number of places for remand prisoners and short-term prisoners was identified by the Director of Prisons for Scotland as inadequate. All long term prisoners suitable for training could not be located in 'training halls' because there were insufficient places. The Director of Prisons estimated that there would be persistent overcrowding in some of Scotland's prisons until 1986 when it was thought that an additional 486 places would be ready for prisoners. 1982 witnessed rooftop protests in Barlinnie, Peterhead, Edinburgh and Dungavel prisons. At Longriggend prison, prisoners barricaded themselves into their cells, destroying furniture and setting furniture and property on fire. Many prisoners also refused meals. There was a riot at Peterhead prison and a rooftop protest at Edinburgh prison. Serious

incidents of unrest were on the increase as were assaults on staff. The SPS explained the unrest by focusing on the individual pathology of prisoners

this enables the authorities to affirm their commitment to the traditional criminological classifications of inadequate and violent personalities and to reject the charge of institutionalized violence within harsh regimes. (Sraton 1991:77)

The rooftop protests continued throughout Scotland's prisons together with fire-raising, dirty protests and the destruction of halls and their contents by prisoners. The mid 1980's saw the Scottish prison system at crisis point.

## **2.5 THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE PRISON CHAPLAIN**

As new specialisms were introduced into the penal system, the prison chaplain experienced a change of status and role. The chaplain's dominant position in the hierarchy of the prison had been enshrined in legislation and together with the governor and medical officer he was regarded as one of the superior officers of a penal institution. Particularly in the post-war period however, the status of chaplains and the influence which they had formally exercised in the Scottish prison system considerably diminished. This resulted in role confusion and a concomitant lack of direction in their prison ministry.

The Prisons (Scotland) Act of 1952 and the Prisons (Scotland) Rules of 1952 indicate that, at the time of issue, the chaplain was responsible for religion, education and welfare. He was expected to conduct regular services of worship and provide the usual religious ministration to prisoners. (Rules 57-66) His duties also included supervising programmes of educational classes (Rule 68(1)) with special attention being given to the education of illiterate prisoners. (Rule 68(2)) He was responsible for library services (Rule 69, 70), for the

welfare of prisoners, (Rule 71-73) and he had also to ensure that the prison in which he worked informed the relatives of those who became seriously ill or who died in custody. (Rule 73) Although the Prison Rules suggest that the tasks of the chaplain were broad and varied, the practice had been somewhat different for several years before 1952.

### **A change in status and role**

Sir Alexander Paterson was appointed Prison Commissioner for England and Wales in 1922 and held this post until 1946. Paterson set about reforming the prison system and although primarily concerned with the English prisons many of his reforms were implemented in Scotland.

Paterson was a man with a deep Christian faith who regarded himself in his own words as 'a missionary, not an administrator' (Fox 1952:67). He reformed and developed the borstal system with an emphasis on character training, based on 'progressive trust demanding increasing personal decision, responsibility and self control'. He introduced the open borstal camp and appointed borstal house masters who were a new grade of prison officer. A new classification scheme for prisoners was introduced and prisons began to have diversified functions to meet the variety of prisoners' needs. Prisoners were to work for about eight hours a day and an adult education system was developed. (Fox 1952:69) This changing penal practice meant that the significance and influence of the church through its prison chaplains decreased further. As early as 1938, in correspondence between Archbishop William Temple and Paterson we find evidence of the concern of English chaplains about their diminishing role within the prison system. Temple wrote to Paterson

[*parochial clergy*]...have called attention...to the fact that the office of Chaplain seems to be regarded now as less responsible than in former times...I have the feeling that this is mainly due to the development of the educational service within the prisons which has naturally taken away from the Chaplain something for which he used to be responsible, but this happened as part of a larger development. I should...be very glad if you felt able...to say to me privately what, if anything, is the policy of the Commissioners with regard to Prison Chaplains... (Ruck 1951:125)

Paterson recognised the past significance of religion and the past status of clergy in prison, and with his Christian beliefs, he felt that the role of the prison chaplain was still a valuable one. Paterson wrote

A prisoner who ceases on discharge from prison to break the law has changed his life, and such a thing can only proceed from a change of heart. To religion, therefore, which touches the deepest springs of human conduct, we look for the redemption of the individual, for it can furnish to the weak and unstable, the highest ideals and the sternest inhibitions. (Ibid.:123)

He continued

Religion is so deep and personal a thing that no rules can compass it, and no Order of Service can entirely meet the need of the individual. Being a thing of the spirit, it cannot be measured by the size of the prison chapel, the number of people who attend it, nor by the number of hours that the prison chaplain spends within the walls...however, the extent to which provision is made by setting aside places of worship and by appointing chaplains is some indication of the importance which the State attaches to religion as a necessary part of prison administration... (Ibid.:124)

Whilst espousing a traditional position in relation to the value of religion in the penal setting, Paterson wrote in reply to Archbishop Temple's concerns about the marginalisation of the chaplains' role

With regard to their [*chaplain's*] vocations, there has, perhaps, been some almost imperceptible change of recent years. Formerly the only education in prison consisted of teaching illiterates to read and write...The position now is different, the number of illiterates has vanished to almost nothing. In the meantime we have been fortunate enough to secure the voluntary services of some 400...men and women teachers...It has become





abundantly clear that the average local Vicar has hardly the time or experience to supervise the work of these teachers...Similarly, the director of the library has become a much more specialised part of work as the number of books has increased...In this way once again the Chaplain has been superseded by a secular expert...While some of these more secular activities have been removed from the domain of the Chaplain we have done what we can to emphasise our increasing sense of the value of his spiritual duties...the Chaplain has found new duties in making himself known to other official prison visitors...one of the greatest values of a Chaplain is the spirit he breathes among the staff...a...Prison Officer at - Prison [*said*], 'The discipline in this prison has improved out of all knowledge since the new Chaplain came'. It was interesting to find him congratulating the Chaplain, who was a man of very modest manner, as a disciplinary asset. (Ibid.:126)

It is interesting to note that Paterson viewed chaplains as 'disciplinary assets' in prisons. The meaning of this concept is unclear but he may have regarded chaplains as having the ability to improve morale and stability in the prison setting. It seems clear however, that chaplains were in prison to serve the ends of penal policy and help keep the prison system functioning effectively.

Although Archbishop Temple's letter was written from an English perspective, his concerns reflected the experience of chaplains in Scotland. By 1925, there were prison staff who became warder teachers for young prisoners at all prisons in Scotland and by 1935 there was special educational provision at Barlinnie, Edinburgh and Greenock prisons undertaken by teachers supplied by local education authorities. The only borstal in Scotland, Polmont Institution, also employed qualified teachers. In spite of the new reforms and the employment of specialists, the work of the chaplain was singled out for comment by the Governor of Polmont Institution, when he reported in 1937 that

Religious instruction is a vital form of character training. The services of the Chaplain and of the Visiting Clergymen are very welcome. Their contribution to the common task is not a mere convention but a service

striking deep at the heart of the problem of moral and social reform.  
(Prison Department for Scotland 1937 para. 62)

Like their English counterparts, chaplains in many Scottish establishments continued to supervise the education of prisoners but 'chaplains...were increasingly...overshadowed by new figures such as education advisers or the energetic voluntary workers'. (Forsythe 1990:179) The expansion of educational provision was halted during the war years but, by 1949, the education programme once again began to develop and expand in the Scottish prison system. The significance of religious education also diminished as new subjects began to be taught in prisons and as a result, '...religious knowledge began to lose its priority and became a residual claimant for curriculum time'. (Wilson 1969:58)

### **The practice of chaplains**

Prior to 1937, Annual Reports of the Prison Department for Scotland had included fairly detailed reports on prison chaplains and their work. These detailed reports of chaplaincy work ceased for nineteen years until 1956, the reasons for this hiatus in reporting and/or publishing unknown. In 1949 Annual Reports began to be published again but significantly they no longer included reports from superior officers of which the chaplain had been one. Statistics on religious affiliation previously included in reports were also no longer featured. Church of Scotland chaplains' reports prior to 1988 have been destroyed by the church authorities. The Scottish Episcopal Church does not request and/or hold individual chaplains' reports and the Roman Catholic Church cannot locate any chaplains' reports prior to 1988. In light of this, it is difficult to present clear and detailed information on the practice of chaplains prior to this time. However, from the limited evidence available (Annual Prisons in Scotland



Reports, Annual Reports of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, Reports to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Reports of the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Roman Catholic Church and miscellaneous papers and correspondence of chaplains), it is clear that some chaplains did embrace the developing rehabilitative penal practice, co-operating with other welfare practitioners, taking part in group work, counselling and other therapeutic activities.

Many clergy...responded to this new age, and joined rather than fought the newcomers. Some of the newcomers, in turn, found the chaplains to be welcome members of a team...the joining together of the chaplains with the professional staff also tended to heighten some of the tensions which already existed in a non-ecumenical age...A seemingly permanent rift began to develop between chaplains who accepted the importance of professional therapeutic and rehabilitative means, and those chaplains who...heap scorn on these ideas. (Shaw 1995:34-5)

Other chaplains preferred to undertake a rather narrower remit in prison but it is probable that many chaplains because of the growing ascendancy of welfare and educational provision in penal establishments, became more aware of their own difficulties in making pronouncements on moral issues without the benefit of scientific/technical expertise. This seems to justify Wilson's claim that, 'even in their pastoral functions, the clergy...have been transformed, by the growth of specialists...into amiable amateurs'. (Wilson 1969:51) It is helpful here to look at the way in which English prison chaplains responded to these changes in their functional role. By 1948, prison chaplains in England began to be more organised and directive in their work acknowledging the increasing use of specialists in prisons. A Chaplain-Inspector was appointed to the prison service to act as a consultant to the prison commissioners on chaplaincy provision. He visited chaplains in the field, offering support, counsel and advice. By the early 1950's, chaplaincy was regarded as a specialism too within the prison service

(see further Copley 1980:77 and the Report of the Prison Commissioners 1949)  
and

with the introduction of new specialisms...in 'moral welfare' and staff involvement in training schemes, the chaplains were being freed from many of the general duties they performed and enabled to concentrate more in their specialism. (Copley 1980:77)

This new situation saw the churches and their chaplains come together to develop clearer ideals and standards in theory and practice. They organised conferences and meetings to discuss the welfare and after-care of prisoners, the effects of imprisonment on prisoners, liturgical matters and ecumenical considerations. Shared retreats were organised by the churches for all chaplains who worked in prisons and borstals. In 1962, an Assistant Chaplain-General was appointed who had overall responsibility for the work and needs of chaplains. The churches also became involved in organising conferences and seminars on penal matters with other interested parties - bringing together representatives from different denominations, lawyers, academics, prison governors and staff and social workers. (Ibid.:79) This gradual interest and involvement in prisons by the churches saw the establishment in 1960 of a Prison Chaplaincies Council whose remit was largely concerned with increasing co-operation and support between outside churches and prison chaplains. (The Church and the Prison 1960) Copley writes

The 1960's closed with the chaplains establishing a fresh approach in their work and ministry. The past pioneering in the educational and welfare fields was now firmly in the hands of tutor-organisers, welfare officers and assistant governors...Chaplains...made their contribution a positive feature which was recognised by the Prison Service...Chaplains were increasingly regarding themselves as members of a treatment and care team concerned to help offenders. (Copley 1980:84)

The position of chaplains in Scotland was very different. As their role became more uncertain, they were unable to look to their national churches for guidance and support about their changing role and the future direction of their ministry in prison. This is evident from the apparent lack of interest in prison ministry shown by national churches in their annual reports about the work of their churches.

Prior to 1963 for example, no reports on prison chaplaincy work were submitted to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. There were reports on ministry to holidaymakers at the seaside, on mission to tinkers, to industry, to the people of the Western Isles, reports on ministry to hospitals, overseas students, even berry pickers and campers but no reports on the work of the church in prison and with prisoners. The Scottish Episcopal Church followed the same pattern of non-reporting apart from a brief statement included in the Annual Reports of the General Synod from time to time. In a period of great change in the penal system and in the churches, churches offered little or no comment and support to their chaplains in the field. This lack of interest would seem to reflect the lack of importance attached to prison ministry by the national churches.

It was only in 1963 that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland produced its *first-ever* report on 'Prison Chaplaincies', a Report wholly concerned with the procedure to be established in relation to the appointment of chaplains and the determination of their terms of service rather than also highlighting the problems of ministry in prison or the changes taking place in the penal system and how these were affecting the practice of ministry. All chaplains were employed on a part-time basis. The Senior Chaplain, who had to be an ordained Church of Scotland minister whether or not s/he was the most

suitable person for the post, worked for a maximum of eighteen hours a week, although many chaplains worked less than this. The Roman Catholic 'visiting clergyman' (only the Church of Scotland chaplain could be called 'Chaplain') worked six hours and the Episcopal 'visiting clergyman' worked for two to three hours every week.

In 1964, a Prison Chaplaincy Board of the Church of Scotland was constituted in order to oversee the work of chaplains in penal establishments.

The mission of the church in that year was described in the following terms

The Church is the army of the Living God, engaged in spiritual warfare. The battlefield stretches across all the continents and oceans, but for us not the least strategic sector of the front is that which lies within our own country...enemy ground is won...not only by steadfast and unslackening pressure exerted day by day and hour by hour all along the front, each individual faithful at his point of duty, but by the making of sortie's and the establishing of bridgeheads. (Church of Scotland 1961:247)

The primary aim of the chaplain's work was described as

the reformation and rehabilitation of those who have been convicted of crime...One prison chaplain sums up his work in these words: 'the Prison Chaplain's task is hard and sometimes disappointing but now and then a letter comes, or perhaps there is a chance encounter with a former prisoner and he hears that some words, or more often some forgotten action of his, was the beginning of a great change. (Church of Scotland 1965 Section 5)

The chaplains' duties were outlined in this way

The great bulk of prisoners have had little or no connection with the Church, and their understanding of the Faith is minimal. One of the functions of the chaplain...is the teaching of the very elements of the Faith, in Bible class and Sunday service...It is routine practice in most of the detention centres for chaplains to see all prisoners shortly after admission and shortly before release; (Church of Scotland 1970a: Section 3)

and further

Prisoners are interviewed on admission, pastoral problems are dealt with, the weekly Sunday services are held together with Bible classes, study and discussion groups...In the Young Offenders' Institutions, Detention Centres and Borstals there appears to be greater possibilities of some effective redemptive work being done. There are initial barriers to be broken down, as one chaplain says, 'there is a built-in resistance to religion, advice or authority'. (Church of Scotland 1971:Section 3)

A later report states that

from their annual reports, it is clear that the chaplains find their work provides them with opportunities of making contact with men and women with whom they would have no other opportunity of sharing the Gospel. Some prisoners can only be described as wicked; some are victims of their background, and of the false values prevalent in our society; but by far the greater number are simply weak-willed and foolish, and more in need of guidance and protection than of punishment. The chaplains have a real job to do and the Board is satisfied that they do it worthily. (Church of Scotland 1976 para. 3)

Chaplains did encourage members of outside churches to become involved in prison ministry. A Prison Visitors Scheme was initiated in the late 1940's by the prison chaplain, the Revd. David Reid at HMP Edinburgh and was later extended to other prisons. All visitors at that time were recruited from local churches. Elders of churches also visited prisoners and at the open prison, HMP Penninghame, it was noted that church members had invited prisoners into their homes. (Prisons in Scotland Report 1960 para. 56) However, the practice of chaplains was primarily concerned, as it had always been historically, with the care of individuals and particularly with those who professed an interest in or who regarded themselves as Christian. They were also concerned with encouraging individuals to experience conversion to Christianity. There is little evidence of chaplains responding to the growing

number of problems in the Scottish prison system and how these affected prisoners. The Committee on Church and Nation of the Church of Scotland, the church's mouthpiece on political and social affairs, submitted the following comments on the Mountbatten Report

It would be unfair to say that nothing is being done. The authorities are conscious of the need for improvement and reforms are being made, as for example, the parole system...[*introduced in 1967*] and this seems to be working well. But it will be obvious from what has been said that the greatest obstacle to progress and to the implementation of forward looking plans is lack of finance. The replacement of out of date prison buildings would seem to be essential and the dispersal of prisoners into smaller units at least highly desirable, if 'treatment and training to fit them to lead a good and useful life on discharge' are to be undertaken with real prospects of success...if, or when the country emerges from its financial difficulties the construction of new prisons should come high among the government's priorities. Whatever may be the future role of the prison officer, and of the chaplain, ...whose work...especially in the reform and rehabilitation of criminals, and who might have much more scope for this work in smaller establishments with improved conditions, greater use will require to be made of psychiatrists and trained social and welfare workers. (Church of Scotland 1969 Section 1)

The Report recommended that a joint working party be established to prepare a fuller report for the following year's General Assembly and it urged the government

when finance is available, to initiate a pilot scheme on a strictly limited scale, under which more individual attention, psychiatric treatment etc., might be given to selected prisoners who were judged most likely to respond to and benefit from such a scheme. (op. cit., Recommendation No. 2)

In its response to prison conditions, the Church and Nation Committee argued that out-of-date prison buildings should be replaced and that the government should, in time, embark on a prison building programme so that the treatment and training of prisoners could continue. It did not express concern that too



many people were already being sentenced to terms of imprisonment, that many of them could have been given community-based sanctions, or that only a minority of prisoners in the system were actually receiving treatment and training.

It advocated further treatment and training of prisoners without critical analysis of this concept and appeared to accept at face value a penal philosophy and practice which, it could be argued, was aimed at more powerful social control of certain sections of the population and which, in Pattison's words, 'aids and abets the cohesion of the prevalent social order as it is, ignoring for the most part its injustices, class conflicts and pathogenic effects'. (Pattison 1994:93)

The Committee's enthusiasm for an increased use of welfare specialists in prisons, especially in smaller units, reflected the acceptance by the church that social scientists and welfare professionals should take the lead. As a consequence, it offered no suggestions about the future role of the prison chaplain and a vision of what the church could offer to prisoners and the prison system through its chaplains. A year later the Church and Nation Committee presented a fuller report to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on the Mountbatten Report but it contained little that was new in terms of analysis and/or recommendations although it did argue that long-term prisoners should be 'offered not only conditions which allow the ordinary decencies of life but a more constructive use of the time they spend in prison'. (Church of Scotland 1971:147)

The analysis by the Church and Nation Committee of the penal situation at the time could be regarded as somewhat naive and superficial. The Mountbatten Report had made clear that secure custody of prisoners was to be of paramount



importance in penal policy and practice, over and above welfare measures. Underlying the new classification system for prisoners advocated by Mountbatten was security, not treatment and training. The need for increased security and control subordinated the aims of treatment and training 'to a very poor second, despite what many people might wish to believe and what most official statements have been proclaiming for years'. (Fitzgerald and Sim 1983:45) Mountbatten did state that

the nature of the prison regime can also contribute greatly to the reduction of the kind of tensions that turn prisoners' minds towards escape. Occupation with worthwhile work, a firm but humane governor and staff, and reasonable opportunities for constructive recreation are not only desirable in themselves but will make for better security. The closer the relationship between prisoners and staff, and the more the majority of prisoners accept the fairness of their treatment, the easier it will be to detect symptoms of unrest which often indicate the planning of an escape attempt. (The Mountbatten Report 1966 para. 322)

In the 1970's as the unrest in Scottish prisons began to grow, the churches' only public pronouncement on the situation came from the Church of Scotland's Church and Nation Committee. In 1973, the Committee expressed its concern at the high levels of imprisonment in Scotland, labelling them as highly disturbing and potentially explosive. It was critical of imprisoning people in sub-standard and unpleasant conditions in the hope that this would have a deterrent effect. (Church of Scotland 1973 Section 3)

The vacuum in penal policy, the growing state of unrest and ultimately of crisis in the SPS also coincided with a growing confusion amongst chaplains about their role coupled with a growing lack of confidence. Chapel attendance in all prisons was now voluntary, and for the most part low, and recruitment of

chaplains was becoming increasingly problematic, a situation highlighted in a Prisons Inspectorate Report which stated that

We were advised...that the filling of vacancies occurring is becoming increasingly difficult and requires considerable efforts by existing chaplains in persuading those personally known to them to consider accepting what is seen to be quite a challenging role. As stated in our Annual Report we found many anomalies and lack of clear direction when considering the work of chaplains...there is a need for a full re-appraisal of the 'Role of the Chaplain' in Scotland...(HMCIP 1986 para. 6.6)

### **The present and future role of chaplaincy**

The decline in the role of the church in society resulted in continuing criticism of the provision of Christian religion in British prisons from the late 1970's onwards. There were those in society who believed that the provision of religion in prison was outdated and should be ended. Baroness Wooton wrote

A secular society demands a secular morality, expressed in human and earthly not theological or supernatural terms. Such a morality is already implicit in much of our way of life: but it still awaits formal acknowledgement in school, in the courts, in penal institutions. (Wooton 1977:273)

Dr. Noel McLagan criticised prison chaplaincy at a Conference of the Howard League for Penal Reform when he said

The real issue is whether for the Prison Department to employ chaplains and other ministers as part of the prison regime is realistic in a materialistic society in which religious practice is irrelevant in the minds of most citizens. (McLagan 1975:23)

He described the chaplaincy service as atavistic. It could no longer be claimed, he argued, that the conversion of the criminal to Christianity was the answer to crime. By encouraging the confession of crime and sin and the idea that both

can be cured by a simple act of conversion or reformation, administrators and reformers alike in the 19th century bequeathed a legacy which has been embarrassing and dangerous.

There seems to be the assumption...that Christianity was synonymous with virtue and that it was difficult if not impossible to be both irreligious and law abiding. The requirement that all prisoners should state their religion on admission provided the chief excuse for a prison chaplaincy service. It was time the illusion that in contrast with the world outside, most prisoners were Christian has dispelled...We must abandon deference to the 'atavistic' remnants of past faiths, now the preserves of minorities, and we need a realistic appraisal of the principles according to which most people now actually live. (Ibid.:24)

In the face of this criticism, chaplains in the English Prison System responded to the change in their role and practice of ministry in a positive way. Richard Atherton, one-time Principal Roman Catholic chaplain, explains

the Chaplaincy was going through a paschal-like experience, a dying and a rising...Despite initial misgivings, chaplains came not only to recognise the value of the contributions that others made to the welfare of prisoners, but also...to develop with them a high degree of sharing and team work. The chaplains...who had so often gone about their task in isolation in their individual institutions, began to grow into a chaplaincy, a unified and cohesive body, with a strong leadership and with more support for the men 'in the field'. They received better training - they became more professional, in the sense of being more competent and more confident in the work they were called to do...chaplains forfeited much of their former status, the Church in prison saw the opportunity of becoming a Church like its Master, seeking 'not to be served but to serve'; as chaplains gave up so many of the anomalous tasks which had accrued to them over the years - they were able to reveal their true role as chaplains and that role, as the Chaplain General explained in 1973, is that we should be priests, pastors and prophets to prisoners and to staff. If that role was secured, what reason to hanker after the past? (Ibid.:36)

In Scotland chaplains were unable to respond in the same way to the challenges that faced them in a changing prison scene. Scottish society was no longer as

strongly underpinned primarily by Christian values, religious pluralism was widespread and people were for the most part, critical of and/or apathetic to organised religion. The majority of prisoners and staff reflected these views. Prisoners were living in increasingly poor conditions, where there was regular industrial strife amongst prison staff, prisoners and staff were being assaulted, the system was heading for an explosive crisis and prison chaplains offered very little critique of the system. Moreover, there is minimal evidence to support the view that if they did have concerns about the state of the prison system, they voiced them to the Prison Department. They were largely voiceless and there were few effective channels through which they could make their legitimate concerns and the needs of prisoners heard throughout the system. One report written in 1981 is perhaps the exception. The senior chaplain of HMP Edinburgh, the Revd. Adrian Watt, wrote to the Prison Department and the Church of Scotland, with a degree of insight and vision, in response to the May Report

Prison staff cannot be asked to operate in a moral vacuum; what we are asking of all staff is a standard of conduct which might be called true Christian manliness...we are thinking of such problem occasions as anger or hostility between a young officer and an old convict...What kind of language do they use? Language, strict honesty in the use of property, private or public, attitudes to authority, much is expected of the young officer. We must positively present to prisoners a more suitable and successful way than their own of living. We cannot expect from prisoners standards of behaviour that they do not see in their officers. It would be unrealistic to ask that all staff be active and enthusiastic Christians but unless some such standard of behaviour be found and agreed there is always the likelihood of increased tension between staff and prisoners. There is for the officer a conflict between discipline and care. Other suggestions - removal of the remand unit to a separate place; more education - research with criminology and penology, links with University, involvement of all staff in ongoing research and learning and involvement of prisoners too; habitation programmes for habitual criminals; study centre and library; interdisciplinary seminars; staff-inmate groups - training of group leaders. There are various activities that

were once part of the chaplain's duty but are now done by specialists, education, welfare. There are changes too in the duties of the discipline staff who are now much more involved in care, relationship, encounter. Such changes are...for the better but it should be noted that, while providing more ample service and facilities for the prisoners, they make much greater demands on the staff and require of them greater understanding of the ultimate purpose of imprisonment. The more widely responsibility is shared, the more necessary it is to ensure that all members of staff understand what they're doing and trying to do.

There is a need for training of all staff, chaplains too, in the objectives of imprisonment and in the part that all members play in achieving the objectives; it would appear that a lot of the preliminary training of staff is more suitable for turnkeys than for modern officers in a modern service.

There is a need for a clear and unequivocal statement of the moral content of our objectives. In the induction programme, there is need for a fuller and deeper psychological examination of a prisoner's abilities and interests so that he may have a better chance of self fulfilment in the work given to him. It would be advisable that in all establishments, the chaplain should see all inmates at induction time. This would make clear to prisoners and staff that whatever kind of life he [*the prisoner*] may have left behind outside, he is now in a setting where he is invited to think about God. Recognising as we do that we live in a secular age and that many prisoners have no connection with the church, we see that we cannot ram God down the prisoner's throat. If we, however, fail to set a standard equally challenging to the prisoner, then we, the authorities, betray our trust and theirs.

A system of part-time chaplaincy can provide the ordinances of religion but we question whether it can meet the real needs of the inmates. It is interesting that part of the chaplain's former duties are now undertaken by about a dozen welfare workers and about an equal number of teachers but the main burden of the chaplain's responsibility is still carried, generally, by one or two part-time chaplains. ..we ask whether it might be beneficial to have extended part-time chaplaincy which will be linked to an ongoing educational process inviting research. This research should include inter disciplinary studies, links with Universities, departments of theology, medicine, psychological services, criminology. (letter from the Revd. Watt to the Scottish Home and Health Department 1981)

Mr. Watt was able to reflect on the current state of the penal system at that time. He questioned its practice and offered concrete proposals for further



discussion and action. He aligned prison chaplaincy with the power of the penal system and one can be critical of this and of his traditional religious approach. Yet he demonstrated that prison chaplains did have a presence within his particular establishment and that they could offer a critique of current practice within that establishment and in the wider system.

There are only two Inspectorate Reports in which concerns about prison regimes and conditions were voiced by chaplains. In 1981 the Chief Inspector reported that

the chaplains' interest extends beyond the conducting of religious services - they share the concern of staff about the problems which are the inevitable consequence of overcrowding, having to retain a large number of inmates outwith the establishment's classification and lack of work in the "pool party". (HMCIP Edinburgh 1981 para. 9.3)

and in 1984, they expressed concern about the conditions in which remand prisoners had to live. (HMCIP Edinburgh 1984 para. 8.5)

Nevertheless, from the limited evidence currently available, (miscellaneous notes from chaplains, daily journals and governors and Inspectorate reports) chaplains continued to practise the traditional role they had held historically which now lacked power and status. They practised a traditional priestly and pastoral ministry with a primary concern for the reformation and salvation of prisoners - conversion and the winning of souls for Christ. Two chaplaincy reports to the Presbytery of Edinburgh illustrate this

The chaplains' ministry of reclamation is never without its disappointments...but these...are more than offset by the...many evidences of lives counselled, comforted, helped and changed through the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Over the year no fewer than twenty inmates have undergone instruction and by profession of faith were admitted to the fellowship of the Lord's Table...(Presbytery of Edinburgh 1971b)

Chaplains...see their job in the light of the Master's words: 'I was in prison and you visited me' and they ever seek under His guidance to channel counsel and compassion, help and hope to the delinquents of society in their incarceration. (Presbytery of Edinburgh 1973b)

Another chaplaincy report to the Presbytery of Glasgow also describes the traditional ministry of prison chaplains

Church services are held every Sunday in prison...attendances are very encouraging, a feature of them being the singing of the well-trained choir...the untried prisoners are all interviewed soon after their admission and the convicted men are visited in the halls and workshops. The prison visitors' concern and help are invaluable in the rehabilitation of the men concerned. (Presbytery of Glasgow 1974)

In an unofficial paper submitted on behalf of some Scottish chaplains to the churches and the prison service in 1979, their role at this time becomes even clearer

Under the general heading of worship, we include the provision of services on Sundays. Teaching, preaching, bible-reading, prayer and praise help to lift the thoughts of the worshippers, and to remind them, though their surroundings are squalid, there is God who is worthy of all honour, God who believes and still hopes for them. There are other smaller groups who meet for study of the Bible and the Faith, for prayer, for communicants and confirmation classes, and for choir practices...The position of the chaplain in prison, is not seen to be at the heart of the objectives of the prison service, nor the religious ministrations of central importance in achieving these objectives...(Chaplaincy Report 1979)

Reports indicate that chaplains lamented the decline in the influence of Christian religion in the penal system, one chaplain describing the situation as 'working in a moral vacuum'. (Church of Scotland 1971 Section 3) As we can learn from reports, churches and their chaplains outlined many factors which they believed had led to the decline - the Second World War, new leisure activities, television, alcohol, science, technology, urbanisation and growing prosperity. However, a decline in interest and commitment to institutional



religion among prisoners did not necessarily mean a decline in their religious/spiritual belief. Michael Northcott argues that 'while people continue to hold features of a religious world view, they do not find ecclesiastical validation of it necessary or relevant'. (Northcott 1994:2) He argues that the traditional view of the secularisation process in society has been based on an overestimate of historical religiosity, identifying declining institutional religion with the demise of religious awareness or behaviour. (Ibid.:2)

The rise of fundamentalism..., the tenacity of folk religion, the resurgence of paganism,...the occult, together with the growth in new religious movements and New Age religious beliefs, all defy the prophecy of religion's death in the modern world. (Ibid.:2)

This view has theological validity. I would argue from my own experience in prison chaplaincy that many people do seek for something beyond the present material world, something that is to do with their spirituality and their relationship with God, something which will help them to break out of the alienation and exile they may feel. They do not perhaps seek salvation in the traditionally accepted sense but they do seek an understanding of the purpose and direction of their lives, their place in God's creation, a quest for wholeness and groundedness, and they seek salvation from the negative influences and events in their lives. This is not something which prison chaplains can ultimately give them, but they can offer to be companions on their spiritual journeys, building them up and encouraging them to view themselves as expressions of the goodness of God rather than as desperate sinners in need of redemption and salvation. Many people also need new forms of liturgy, music, prayer, symbols, fellowship to help them discover and develop their spirituality.

Prison chaplains, I believe, marginalised themselves to an extent, continuing to perpetuate a theology and practice that was no longer so relevant to a modern

post-war world and its people. As Davie has argued, many clergy continued to live in the past, harking to a supposed 'golden age' and prison chaplains may have done the same, remembering a time when their role was important and influential rather than adapting their ministry to suit a different set of circumstances. They seemed unable to carve out a different role for themselves within the system and their confusion and lack of vision and direction helped to place them at the periphery of penal establishments.

### **A crisis of confidence**

By the beginning of the 1980's, an Inspectorate report indicated that

although the chaplains enjoy a satisfactory relationship with the majority of inmates and members of staff, they would appreciate a greater measure of communication with and guidance from members of senior management. (HMCIP Perth 1982 para. 8.3)

With the exception of the women's prison, Cornton Vale, all chaplains expressed concern about their role in the SPS.

In HMP Edinburgh, it was noted that chaplains '...share a common concern about their precise role within the establishment'. (HMCIP Edinburgh 1981 para. 9.3) The following extracts from Inspectorate reports also indicate a selection of the concerns expressed to the Inspectorate by most chaplains in most establishments about their role

In HMP Peterhead

All the Chaplains expressed uncertainty about their role within the establishment and would welcome advice and guidance from senior management. They are anxious to play a positive role but feel inhibited because of the lack of suitable interviewing facilities, their inability to

move freely throughout the prison and the limited information made available to them concerning the religious persuasion of inmates on admission. (HMCIP Peterhead 1981 para. 8.3)

The Inspectorate team reported that at HMP Shotts

Chaplains indicated a desire for better induction and guidance as to their duties. We have drawn this to the attention of the Governor and have advised the Director (of the SPS) that this is a feeling which is regularly expressed to us by chaplains during our inspections. (HMCIP Shotts 1985 para. 8.18)

By 1986 the Chief Inspector of Prisons wrote

in the course of the past two or three years, as patterns emerged from a series of establishment inspections, it has become increasingly obvious that the role of Chaplaincy in the Scottish Prison Service, for a variety of reasons, has been subject to much informal change and has become confused, misconstrued by some, and is generally in need of a thorough overhaul. (HMCIP 1986 para. 1.3)

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The observations made by the Inspectorate revealed a crisis of confidence amongst chaplains in Scotland. Even though the marginalisation of their function began very much earlier, it is of concern that by the 1980's, they had still not been able to discern a role for themselves within the prison system. The role confusion which they were experiencing and the accompanying uncertainty about their tasks, highlight some issues worthy of further consideration.

First, one has to ask how the national churches allowed this situation to develop? Earlier in this chapter, it was argued that the national churches offered chaplains little in the way of guidance and encouragement and

expressed little interest in their work. There was no forum available so that prison chaplains could meet together and/or with other church representatives to discuss their work and there was no official pastoral support of chaplains by bishops and/or presbytery representatives. This situation must have induced feelings of isolation among prison chaplains. The lack of encouragement and interest by churches is further borne out by evidence cited previously. Church of Scotland chaplains for example had been working in the penal system for nearly one hundred years before their church produced any reports about their work. The Church and Nation Committee compiled reports from time to time about penal issues and these are to be welcomed, but they made pronouncements on a system in which their church's ministry was arguably weakest. The Scottish Episcopal church in its annual reports made only the most minor comments on their chaplains' work in prisons.

In the area of recruitment, prison chaplaincy appointments were made by presbytery representatives and/or bishops, many of whom had little or no knowledge and experience of prison ministry and little understanding of the highly specialised nature of the work which required very particular skills and ability from its clergy. The outcome was that the recruitment of able people properly suited to prison ministry did not always take place. This weakness in the system of recruitment I would suggest, contributed to a lack of vision and purpose amongst chaplains who were carrying out the task of prison ministry for a variety of different motives. Every chaplain had to be an ordained minister or priest and their prison ministry only covered a small percentage of their working week, the rest of the time being spent on parish duties. From miscellaneous papers written by chaplains, it appears that there were some chaplains who voiced criticisms about the churches' policy on the number of hours worked, believing that such limited working hours inevitably meant that

the work in which a chaplain was engaged in prison would be severely limited, but their comments were to no avail and in the mid 1980's their hours were reduced further. This policy of limited part-time employment must have contributed largely to the marginalisation of the chaplains' role as chaplains could hardly be expected to maintain a significant presence in prison establishments working for example, six hours each week.

There was also very little evidence of ecumenical co-operation between chaplains. The dominance of presbyterianism in prison chaplaincy meant that Episcopal and Roman Catholic chaplains were given a minority position. Chaplains did not work in teams which might have maximised their presence in establishments as much as was possible within the constraints of time. Most chaplains worked in isolation, possibly reflecting the practice of their ministry in their parishes.

It is extraordinary that some chaplains sought to receive from senior management and the Prison Department, 'advice and guidance as to their duties', as one Inspectorate report revealed. (HMCIP Peterhead 1981 para. 8.3) One would have thought that chaplains would have naturally discussed such matters with their Church authorities and/or in consultation with senior management rather than with Inspectorate staff compiling inspection reports. It also demonstrates a prison chaplaincy exercising little initiative and/or independence within the system, leaving it open to the possible manipulation by the SPS of its role and task in order to serve the primary ends of the system, namely security and control. It did not place the chaplaincy in a position where it would have been likely to practise a prophetic ministry.

One cannot however be too pessimistic about the chaplains of this period and earlier. Prisons in Scotland Reports and Inspectorate Reports bear witness to the fact that despite their churches' lack of interest in their work, and the problems they faced in the prison system, many chaplains worked very hard to further the message of the Gospel, to provide some relief from anxiety and pain and to offer reassurance to prisoners and staff. They were still accorded a place in the penal system through legislation and by the prison authorities, their past significance still acknowledged and respected to a degree. 'Their sacredness, solemnity and the seriousness of their pronouncements', (Wilson 1969:55) ensured their continuing place within the system. There were many converts to Christianity amongst the prison population and chaplains and prisoners can testify to lives changed through such conversion. From the evidence available however chaplains did not seem to offer to the penal system a constructive critique on its practice.

The reality was that chaplains, at this time and by their own admission, were confused, seeking to minister in a positive way, but frustrated and isolated. The majority of them therefore found it difficult to practise a wholly effective ministry to the whole institution and to the people imprisoned in Scotland's prisons.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE SCOTTISH PRISON SERVICE AND CHAPLAINCY IN TRANSITION 1986 - 1995**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

It was argued in the previous chapter that, particularly in the post war period, the role of the prison chaplain had become increasingly marginalised in the Scottish prison system. By the early 1980's, the Prisons Inspectorate was becoming concerned about the work of prison chaplains and chaplains themselves were becoming confused about their role. This chapter will look further at the role of prison chaplaincy during a period of crisis in Scottish prisons in the 1980's and early 1990's. The first section of the chapter will summarise the causes and characteristics of the penal crisis and the second section will focus on the response of the SPS to the crisis. The final two sections of the chapter will explain and discuss the nature of the concomitant crisis in prison chaplaincy and how the SPS and the churches attempted to resolve this crisis.

#### **3.1 THE CRISIS IN THE SCOTTISH PRISON SYSTEM**

In April 1986, Alistair Thomson, the Director of the Scottish Prison Service addressed a conference on 'Law and Order - Prospects for the Future', organised



by the Centre for Theology and Public Issues in Edinburgh. The subject of his address was 'Has the Present Prison System Failed?' He said

the task of the prison system is to provide for prisoners as full a life as is consistent with the facts of custody...it is incumbent on us to make available for prisoners the physical necessities of life; care for physical and mental health; advice and help with personal problems; and an opportunity to practice their religion. We must...also enable prisoners so far as possible to retain links with family and community and...promote and preserve the self respect of prisoners and encourage them to respond and contribute positively to society on discharge. (Thomson 1987:60)

He continued

we have been endeavouring to make greater use of our own uniformed staff in helping prisoners to deal with problems...In recent years we have tried to facilitate the maintenance of family links...We have increased the minimum entitlement to visits and...a very substantial part of the prison population now has access to pay phones. Inmates now have the possibility of quickly sorting out family...problems which, in the past, because of the difficulty of dealing with them promptly, caused such frustration and often led to acts of indiscipline which...make matters worse...we do try to ensure that as the long-term prisoner moves through the system he/she is entrusted with as much decision-making as possible. This forms an integral part of the progressive system which we seek to operate. (Ibid.: 63)

In concluding his address, he said

I submit that it would be quite wrong to claim that the prison system has failed because there is simply no consensus as to what it is supposed to be doing, other than to retain people in custody...I would argue that it is not unreasonable to claim success for the prison system if a man or a woman leaves the prison system without having been institutionalised...and with having gained something in prison which will help him or her to lead an honest life...It is my belief that, by and large, that objective is achieved. (Ibid.:64f.)

This speech was delivered against a background of growing unrest in Scotland's prisons. In 1985 there had been a marked increase in the number of people being sent to prison, the average daily population rising from 4,753 in 1984 to 5,273 in 1985 and 5,588 in 1986. (Adler and Longhurst 1994:19) In 1985 the number of receptions into custody were the highest ever and the highest in Europe. (18,985 on remand and 24,532 under sentence). The following year, the average daily population was at its highest ever recorded (5,588). (Ibid.:215)

### **Prison Disruptions 1986 - 1987**

In 1985, there had been an attempted escape at Peterhead Prison when nine members of staff were taken hostage and later that year, seven members of staff were held at gun point during an escape by prisoners. (SPS 1988b Appendix 2: 2,3) Two months after Alistair Thomson delivered his conference paper, prisoners rioted in HMP Glenochil, a serious fire damaged a hall in HMP Perth and there began a period of serious unrest in other Scottish prisons. Major protests and riots by prisoners took place at HMP Edinburgh and HMP Peterhead in the same year, and at HMP Barlinnie, Shotts, Peterhead and Perth in the following year. During these protests, individual prison officers were taken hostage, demonstrations were made from rooftops, hundreds of prisoners went on hunger strike, halls were wrecked by prisoners attempting to air grievances which they alleged had not been investigated or dealt with in a fair way by the SPS. (Scruton 1991:2)

### *HMP Edinburgh 1986*

The first major siege began in HMP Edinburgh in late October 1986. Prisoners, some of whom had been transferred from Peterhead Prison were aggrieved over changes to the parole system, being transferred from Peterhead Prison, a lack of visiting rights and alleged brutalising of prisoners by prison officers at Peterhead. They held a prison officer hostage for four days. (SPS 1988b Appendix 2.5)

### *HMP Peterhead 1986*

Another serious riot took place at Peterhead Prison shortly after the Edinburgh incident. Prisoners spent five days and nights on the prison roof to draw attention to their grievances which they listed as poor food, insufficient work, long periods locked up in cells, few facilities for recreation and proper exercise, restrictive visiting quarters and humiliating rules and regulations. They were also protesting about the use of the 'silent' cell where the only furniture was a mattress, the brutality of some of the staff and the recent withdrawal of parole, which deprived long-term prisoners of any hope. Peterhead Prison had experienced periods of unrest prior to this riot, yet the newly appointed Scottish Office Industry and Home Affairs Minister, Ian Lang MP touring Peterhead prison one month before this riot, claimed publicly that conditions at the prison were 'extremely good'. He concluded

Peterhead has always had difficult prisoners and there is always the potential for unrest. I think the professionalism of the staff in managing the prison so well is highly commendable. I have been very impressed with the atmosphere. (Gateway Exchange 1987:37)

One month after Ian Lang's visit, several Scottish prisons erupted in scenes of unprecedented anger and frustration by prisoners. (Ibid.:37) This ninety-three hour riot 'eventually led to three men each receiving sentences of ten years for mobbing, rioting and hostage taking'. (Ibid.:37; SPS 1988b para. 2.6) The SPS' analysis of events was a well worn one. A small group of violent men who were inciting unrest were a violent minority who would cause trouble in any system and 'as their language is one of violence the response has to be punitive'. (Gateway Exchange 1987:39; HMCIP 1985 para. 2.6)

Yet 'the level of political pressure from within Peterhead's walls involving letters and statements as well as protests from prisoners and staff served warning on the authorities that they were dealing with large numbers of prisoners who refused to be marginalised as a 'violent minority'. As with all other evidence, it was a warning the authorities chose to ignore'. (Gateway Exchange 1987:39)

### *HMP Barlinnie 1987*

Two months later in January 1987 another violent riot took place at HMP Barlinnie when twenty prisoners took control of one block in the prison and went onto the roof to protest against brutality and torture. Three prison officers were taken hostage. (SPS 1988b para. 2.7) Many prisoners complained that they were sharing a cell with two others, they regarded the grievance procedures as deceitful and ineffective. They further argued that they were discouraged from complaining about treatment and conditions because previous complaints and requests had often been rejected without explanation both by Governors and civil servants in the Prison Department - such enquiries as took place tended to be inevitably weighted against prisoners. The Chief Inspector

of Prisons at the time, Tom Buyers, reporting on the situation at Peterhead prison, conceded that in relation to prisoners' grievances

the right to air grievances was an important one for prisoners where injustices, real or imagined, could cause anguish and if allowed to fester, lead to violence. (Gateway Exchange 1987:99)

The Scottish Office minister responsible for Home Affairs at the time, Ian Lang MP, was quoted as saying, 'Prisoners are free to write to the police or to ask for a meeting with police officers'. (The Independent 8.1.87) However, this assurance was far from the reality of the brutality of Scottish prison life, and from a penal philosophy and policy preoccupied with control and with punishment. At the time of the unrest, there was serious overcrowding in many Scottish prisons, there was a lack of facilities for education, training, work and a lack of opportunities for prisoners to address and change their offending behaviour. Stricter discipline and the maintenance of law and order within the prisons was emphasised, demonstrated by the use of solitary confinement in the segregation block at HMP Peterhead and the infamous 'cages' in Inverness. Although criticisms were levelled at the SPS for its continued use of the 'cages', by penal reform groups, politicians, the media and prisoners throughout the 1980's, the Prisons Inspectorate described them in this way

In the past the Inverness Unit has received unfavourable publicity in the media, often using the emotive term 'cages'. While the need for such a Unit is regrettable, we should stress that in our view, the Unit is being run in a humane and proper fashion. (HMCIP Inverness 1987a para. 8.19)

## *Alternative Regimes*

Prison Governors and the Scottish Prison Officers Association had over the years, urged the adoption of minimum standards within Scottish prisons but Government ministers had refused to take the matter up in Scotland. In 1983, a Working Party had been set up by the Scottish Office to consider Alternative Regimes in Prisons and by 1986, it had yet to publish even an interim report on practice in prison. The working party were to consider a proposal from the Scottish Prison Officers Association that, 'a number of small units should be provided for inmates who present serious management problems'. (SPS 1988 Appendix 8 para 1) An interim report was eventually written. It was 'leaked' to the Scottish Council for Civil Liberties during the period of prison disruptions. The Working Party had reported that the inconsistencies and unfairness within the penal system and the lack of a properly structured system of classification, allocation, assessment and regime development could contribute to prisoner unrest and indiscipline. (paras. 6.1-6.4) The Working Party recommended that prisoners should be sent to the nearest prison to their home where possible to help maintain and foster family links (para 6.1); there should be better initial assessment and monitoring of prisoners with greater clarity and consistency of procedures (para. 6.4); every prison should have its own 'time out' unit for segregating subversive prisoners (para. 9) and that there should also be a new national 'time out' unit at Perth prison. (para. 10) The Scottish Office at the time gave no public indication that they were going to reconsider prison policy as a result of the 'leaked' report and the continuing unrest in prison establishments.

## *HMP Shotts*

A siege at HMP Shotts in September 1987 and a further siege at Peterhead, brought matters to a head for the Prison Department. The siege at Peterhead was the sixth major incident in Scotland's prisons in a year and the fifth in which prison officers were taken hostage. The use of stun grenades and tear gas ended the siege bringing a further escalation in the capacity of the prison authorities to respond with force in order to deal with such situations. One year on from the first prison siege, the complaints of prisoners were still about the apparent unfairness of the parole system, the need for an investigation into injuries allegedly inflicted on prisoners by staff, the need for pay phones for prisoners and complaints about long term solitary confinement.

The legacy of these prison sieges in Scotland was a painful one - prison officers had been taken hostage and their lives seriously threatened; scores of staff and prisoners were injured and hundreds of thousands of pounds of damage was incurred. The protests of prisoners, lobbying by prison reform pressure groups and the resultant public disquiet about the crisis in prisons played a major role in forcing the Scottish Home and Health Department and the SPS to finally adopt a reassessment of its penal policy. This is evidenced from internal Government memoranda.

During this turbulent time, there appears to have been no official comment, criticism or protest from any national church authority about the crisis in the Scottish penal system. One prison chaplain at Peterhead prison did publicly voice concerns he had about conditions in that prison. Another prison chaplain who worked at Peterhead prison and who wanted to speak out during the period of unrest but felt he could not, said in an interview with the writer



I'm not a very confrontational person but would rather be much more confrontational with the system. Sometimes there were situations at Peterhead where I made a lot of mistakes because I didn't really stand up for the men. I was green, so I did nothing and I had sleepless nights. I just went in and out - all the chaplains did - and I saw all these things going on but I wasn't able to see how I could challenge the system as it was. The prisoners were challenging it. There were points when we did stick our heads over the parapet and we got them shot off as a group. One of the chaplains who was a bit more confident, wrote to the papers. We were dragged in to see the governor and told not to talk to the press. I used to get a lot of 'phone calls during the riots. Sometimes I made a comment but usually I said, 'no comment'.

From the evidence available, chaplains from other prisons where there was unrest, made no public comment. A passing mention to the disturbances was finally made two years after the unrest began, in the Report of the Prison Chaplaincies Board to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May 1988

The year has been one of considerable and sometimes violent restlessness in many of HM Prisons. Overcrowding, difficult prisoners and staff stress have been significant factors and in all of this our chaplains have ministered in every possible way. (Church of Scotland 1988c para. 2.1)

The Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland produced a report in the same year on 'Scottish Prisons and Sentencing Policy'. The Committee investigated the means by which 'penal and prison reform could be promoted, including the appropriateness of custodial care for offenders...' (Church of Scotland 1988a para. 2.1)

The Report states that

Recent disturbances, though deplorable, have focused attention on a forgotten crisis in our prisons. Sentencing policy and prison

conditions...are reflections of moral attitudes in society and raise probing questions about Christian forgiveness and responsibility...it is important to examine the conditions of life and work in prisons. It is not within the Committee's remit to comment specifically on the prison violence, but they condemn that violence and deeply regret injuries caused and denial of facilities to fellow inmates. Troubles are perhaps inevitable under the present strains and it is...urgent that prison conditions should be improved to present only a minimum of stress compatible with security. (paras. 2.2, 2.7)

On the subject of rehabilitation of prisoners, the Report asserts that

The Church has a duty to defend the purpose of rehabilitation as no less important than containment and punishment, both because of the Gospel of redemption and for the sake of the proper treatment of prisoners. If prisons are to have a positive influence in returning offenders to society, it is important that the system enables them to develop personal and social qualities and to restore self-esteem if it has been lost. (para. 2.9)

Finally the Report argues that

The Church needs to assess its attitudes to the principles and assumptions of penal policy...Penal policy is of wider significance, however, than for theologians, prison workers and inmates alone because crime tarnishes life for all of us, whether victims or offenders...it is the responsibility of all Christians to concern themselves in this area where the human condition, both physical and spiritual is at risk. Both prisoners and prison staff spend their days behind locked doors and need the understanding and support of the community. To fulfil this need it is essential for the public (a) to know what goes on behind prison walls and to endeavour to inform themselves accordingly; (b) to be prepared to offer uncritical friendship and encouragement to those being returned to everyday life from prison; (c) to visit and support the families of prisoners who often feel lonely and ignored by neighbours; (d) to further the work being done in resource centres for alcoholism and drug abuse which contribute largely to the increase in crime; and (e) to include in their prayers the prisoners, all prison workers and those in authority. Christ gave us an unequivocal example of commitment to the needy in society. If we are to help heal a society divided by crime and poverty we too must show signs of mercy and hope...but national commitment to this under-recognised work will

have to be continuous if real progress is to be expected. (paras. 2.19-2.21)

This Report was a positive but broad response to the penal unrest of the previous two years and indicated a good measure of concern by the church. It also offered an understanding of some of the causes of crime. There is however, no specific reference to chaplains and their role within the prison system. The Church and Nation committee produced two further reports in 1994 and 1995 on the themes of crime and punishment. In the 1994 report, the Committee argues that 'prisons are for the containment and rehabilitation of offenders...but prisons do not reform prisoners; recidivism remains too high'. (Church of Scotland 1994 para 5) The Report recognises the need for prison reform, it considers alternatives to prison (para. 5) and discusses the role of the church (para. 7) Its only reference to the work of prison chaplains is contained in a section on 'Privatisation of Prisons and Prisoner Escort Services', where it comments that it

is concerned about possible future effects that privatisation could have on Prison Chaplaincy. Unless there is, as in England, a statutory requirement to have chaplaincy services, there may be little incentive for prisons to have chaplains. (Ibid.: para. 5)

Stephen Pattison, writing about chaplains in mental health services, writes that

in general, churches seem content to nominate or approve chaplains for appointment...and then to forget about them...It is almost as if the churches actually want to have only a token and ineffectual presence...This demonstrates a certain amount of concern without requiring anything further of the churches in terms of action...There is thus little active, critical support for chaplains in their pastoral work which might help to radicalise their perspectives and practice. (Pattison 1994:205)

### **3.2 THE RESPONSE OF THE SCOTTISH PRISON SERVICE TO THE CRISIS**

The Scottish prison system was in a state of crisis - its philosophy, its policy and its credibility to manage the prison estate were radically called into question. (see further Adler and Longhurst 1994:214-236 and Scraton 1991) In the period immediately following the riots and unrest, swift action was taken by the SPS to control prisoners in establishments through 'lock down' procedures. Prisoners labelled as disruptive were locked in their cells for twenty-three hours a day and received no privileges, visits or recreation. Some were placed in solitary confinement for two years and more, some were confined to Peterhead's infamous E Hall for periods of up to four years while others were confined in Shotts 'lock down' area for periods of up to two years. Once the disruptive prisoners had been identified and dealt with, the SPS began a lengthy consultation period in order to ascertain how such unrest and disturbance could be avoided in the prison system in the future.

In 1988, 'Custody and Care' (C&C 1988a) was published, the first in a series of policy documents issued by the SPS. 'Custody and Care' made an attempt at formulating new policies and plans for the future of the Scottish Prison Service. It set out the task and responsibilities of the SPS, (C&C Section B, Chaps. 2 - 6) the policy and priorities for prisoners, (Section C:7 - 9) some indications of planning strategies for individual penal establishments (Section D: 10 - 12) and a training strategy for staff. (Section E:13,14) The discussion document, 'Assessment and Control' (A&C) followed with its plans for the control and management of violent and disruptive prisoners. (SPS 1988b) This document gave an analysis of the prison disruptions in the mid 1980's and concentrated on individual pathology, (A&C chapter 5) the pattern of circumstances which

might have caused individual prisoners to react against the penal system (chaps. 2-4) and it presented plans for the future pattern of specialised units for difficult prisoners. (chaps. 8 - 9)

The SPS Business Plan published in 1989 introduced the Mission Statement of the SPS

- i. to keep in custody untried or unsentenced prisoners, and to ensure that they are available to be presented to court for trial or sentence;
- ii. to keep in custody, with such degree of security as is appropriate, having regard to the nature of the individual prisoners and his offence, sentenced prisoners for the duration of their sentence or for such shorter time as the Secretary of State may determine in cases where he has discretion;
- iii. to provide for prisoners as full a life as is consistent with the facts of custody, in particular making available the physical necessities of life; care for physical and mental health; advice and help with personal problems; work, education, skill training, physical exercise and recreation; and opportunity to practice their religion;
- iv. to promote and preserve the self respect of prisoners;
- v. to enable prisoners to retain links with family and community;
- vi. to encourage them to respond and contribute positively to society on discharge. (SPS 1989a:4)

In 1990, the SPS published 'Opportunity and Responsibility' (O&R), an important document reviewing the long term adult male prisoner system and defining the penal philosophy of the Service for the next decade. (SPS 1990a) In this document, unlike 'Assessment and Control' where the locus of unrest had been firmly placed on the individual pathology of prisoners, the SPS did recognise that several other factors had contributed to the unrest in the 1980's - overcrowding (O&R 1990 para. 3.3), the rationalisation of the use of the prison estate which was called Grand Design by the SPS (para. 3.4), sporadic and unbalanced liberalisation of regimes (para. 3.5), deterrent sentencing, (para.

3.6) changes to parole eligibility (para. 3.7) and 'problems' at HMP Peterhead. (para. 3.8) (see further Adler and Longhurst 1994:224 - 230)

'Opportunity and Responsibility' was a highly significant document and was made available to Lord Justice Woolf during his Inquiry into Prison Disturbances at HMP Strangeways, Manchester which took place in April 1990. Some of the key concepts of 'Opportunity and Responsibility' were adopted by Woolf. (Morgan1991:9) In his final Report Woolf suggested that there had to be a balance between security, control and justice in prison establishments. (Woolf 1991:para. 9.19)

'Security' refers to the obligation of the Prison Service to prevent prisoners escaping. 'Control' deals with the obligation of the Prison Service to prevent prisoners being disruptive. 'Justice' refers to the obligation of the Prison Service to treat prisoners with humanity and fairness and to prepare them for their return to the community in a way which makes it less likely that they will reoffend. (para. 9.20)

There were two basic requirements if these requirements were to be made.

- i) sufficient attention has to be paid to each of the requirements;
- ii) they must be kept in balance. (para. 9.21)

Woolf recommended that prisoners should be involved in more active regimes, access to sanitation should be provided for everyone, work should be properly paid, there should be better access to education programmes, contact between prisoners and their families should be improved and prisoners should wear more dignified clothing. Woolf also argued

If the Prison Service contains that prisoner in conditions which are inhumane or degrading or which are otherwise wholly inappropriate, then a punishment of imprisonment which was justly imposed, will result in injustice...that, while the prisoner should be subjected to the stigma of imprisonment, and should be confined in a prison, the prisoner is not to be subjected to inhumane or degrading treatment. (para. 10.19)



If the experience of imprisonment is unjust for a prisoner, he/she will go back to his/her community feeling

embittered and disaffected, if they are not given every opportunity to serve his or her sentence in a constructive way...it is likely that there will be a deterioration in the ability of the prisoner to operate effectively and lawfully within society (paras. 14.8-9)

Woolf's recommendations included increased delegation of responsibility to governors of establishments (para. 15.53), an enhanced role for prison officers (para. 15.54), a 'contract' for each prisoner setting out the prisoner's expectations and responsibilities in the prison in which he or she is held (para. 5.55), better prospects for prisoners to maintain their links with families and the community through more visits and home leaves and through being located in community prisons as near to their homes as possible (para. 5.59), the division of prison establishments into small and more manageable and secure units (para. 5.510), and improved standards of justice within prisons involving the giving of reasons to prisoners for any decision which materially and adversely affects them individually. (para. 5.512)

The new policy of 'Opportunity and Responsibility' in the Scottish system was based on encouraging long-term prisoners to develop a sense of personal responsibility for their own circumstances and enabling them to share in a decision-making process related to how they carried out their sentences. Central to the strategy was the 'Sentence Planning Scheme', a package intended to help prison officers, specialist staff and individual prisoners understand together the significant elements of the prisoner's situation on admission to prison

any problems the prisoner may have in relation to his offence, family, work and personal skills; what ambitions the prisoner has...an opportunity



to address what needs to be done to help the prisoner deal with his problems and meet his ambitions. (SPS 1990a para 6.2)

The role of prison officers would be extended

to use their own values and experience to make sound judgements when faced with options in life. We believe that their understanding and knowledge will be of considerable value in the role of facilitator to assist inmates review their situation. (para. 6.3)

The sentence plan for an individual prisoner outlining his personal preferences and options would be reviewed and agreed by a local Sentence Planning Board. Throughout his sentence, the prisoner would be invited to review his sentence plan and his progress would be monitored on a regular basis. It was intended that the emphasis would move from a situation where staff and specialists attempted to have complete knowledge and authority over prisoners, to one where they exercised only such power as was necessary for security and control. They would thus learn to respond to prisoners through a facilitative role and enable them to exercise greater control over their own lives.

Opportunity and Responsibility also emphasised that there should be minimum elements which a prisoner should receive by right, on entry to an establishment

every prisoner who wishes should have the opportunity of a room of his own; and,  
every prisoner should have access to night sanitation, or have integral sanitation (SPS 1990a: 6:7)

There should be opportunities to pursue some degree of education, vocational training courses and pre-release training. The SPS envisaged developing the long-term prisoner system

so that more of the elements which previously were regarded as privileges come to be seen as part of the basic threshold quality of life in prison...Once...changes have been introduced and the opportunities for personal development are in place, we feel that the notion of 'privileges' will become redundant. (Ibid.:5:14)

The SPS committed itself to normalisation of establishments, so that prisoners could have the opportunity to live as normal a life 'as may be consistent with the requirements of security and order'. (para 6.3) The SPS envisaged greater access to family relatives so that prisoners could be encouraged to have greater responsibility for their wives/husbands and children during sentence and on release. Other plans included the introduction of pay phones, the installation of electrical power into cells and washing machines in halls.

There was seen to be a need for a balance in security, order and regime in establishments. (chap. 7) It was felt that more long-term prisoners should be classified in the lower security categories, C and D from the outset of their sentence and that halls in prisons should be based on security categories. (para. 7:9) As quickly as possible after reception, the prisoner should be assisted to choose a prison suitable for him and having arrived at the prison of his choice, he should undergo an induction period. A Personal Officer would work with the prisoner through a series of discussions and counselling sessions to decide what should be the process and nature of the prisoner's activities and work throughout his sentence - in effect - to create a Sentence Plan.

## **The failure of Sentence Planning**

The Sentence Planning Scheme was described as a 'key initiative' of the SPS and was introduced in 1992 but it has become clear that since its inception it has been beset by difficulties and the SPS now recognises that the policy has largely failed in its objectives

It is clear that the Sentence Planning initiative is floundering quite badly. There is little evidence of consistent understanding of the aims of the initiative, both prisoners and staff ascribe very low credibility to the initiative and the actual procedures of the initiative are carried out poorly and lack consistency. Accommodation availability to local prisons is erratic and subject to expediencies concerned with population pressures... (SPS 1994b para. 2)

It continued

There is little evidence of management viewing the initiative as a priority and in many instances, the process has been left to specific individuals, usually no higher than SO [*Senior officer*]...the operation presently lacks credibility. (paras. 3, 5)

The concepts of empowerment and the responsible prisoner were also problematic to those staff who had experienced problems with prisoner behaviour. Staff viewed these ideas as 'handing over control of aspects of their jobs to prisoners who if they were responsible people would not be in prison in the first place'. (para. 10) At the time of its implementation, the SPS had concentrated on delivering the mechanics of the scheme to prisoners and staff rather than emphasising the conceptual and philosophical aspects of the scheme. It was found that there was in the implementation

considerable staff resistance to accepting the idea of the prisoner as being 'responsible' or of being a 'customer' or accepting the concepts of

'normalisation' and 'empowerment', believing that normalisation was a form of appeasement by management. (SPS 1993b: para 9)

The allocation process (i.e., giving prisoners choice over the prison/s in which they wish to serve their sentences) did not deliver the opportunities or enhance the choice that the scheme had promised because of lack of spaces in the LTP (long-term prisoner) system (para. 6); there was a lack of co-ordinated prisoner movement from the prison to which they were admitted to other long-term prisons ( para. 6.2); there was no realistic choice of a long-term prison to go to (para. 6.4); there was a lack of awareness by prison officers in the allocation prisons of the opportunities available in the long term prisons (para. 6.5) and there was inconsistent use of the security category algorithm; (i.e., categorising the measure of 'dangerousness' of a prisoner (paras 6.6)

### **The Personal Officer Scheme**

Each prisoner in a long-term prison was promised that he would have a Personal Officer who would offer ongoing practical help and support to him. However, several problem areas were identified in this regard.

First, there was a problem with inconsistent staffing. It was found that prisoners' Personal Officers could be absent from the halls for several weeks due to leave, night shifts and other duties. Subsequently, there was no consistent support given to the prisoners. The Scheme had made provision for a second officer to be assigned to each prisoner to cover such circumstances but this was found impracticable due to staff shortages, inadequate management and inconsistent staff rostering. (para 7.1)

In the area of training, insufficient training had been given to Personal Officers (para. 7.2). Many officers had received no training at all. Others had been trained for periods of between thirty minutes and two hours. Others were given only printed material to read. There was a poor level of awareness of the work involved in sentence planning at all management levels and out of a total of seven hundred Principal and Senior Officers, only two hundred had received formal training on Sentence Planning.

It was recognised that staff perceived a conflict of interest between the view of the prisoner as a responsible person and their role in gathering and using security information about prisoners. The availability of some regime activities in some establishments still relied on the security category of the prisoner. There was a resistance by staff to accept that security category was a measure of dangerousness rather than a reward for good behaviour or a method of control. (para 7.3)

The personal development file (PDF) had been intended to help prisoners identify areas in their lives which were causing difficulties during the various stages of their sentence. Personal Officers were then expected to advise and support prisoners as they worked through the difficulties. It was found however, that the PDF was not being widely used and that prisoners were reluctant to discuss aspects of the PDF with staff and personal officers. (para 7.4)

It was hoped that a spirit of openness would fundamentally underpin the operation of the Sentence Planning Scheme and that this spirit would extend to an open reporting system. (para. 8) Yet although the Sentence Planning Scheme was to offer choice to the prisoner, other decision-making bodies in the

SPS such as the Security Categorisation Boards in establishments were drawing on information gathered by operations staff in relation to dangerousness and making decisions about prisoners and their progress which were not available to Personal Officers or prisoners. Subsequently, decisions were being reached about prisoners the basis of which conflicted with what the prisoner and Personal Officer expected based on reports of their progress. Prisoners saw this as damaging the credibility of the scheme. There was also considerable resistance by some staff to operating an open system. At one prison it was found 'that a 'closed' backup quarterly report system was being used in the halls'. (para 8) and various sections of information on these reports were being marked, 'Not to be read to the prisoner'. (para. 8)

Despite these serious problems however, the Sentence Planning Initiative still remains the key service delivery priority in the SPS strategic plan. The SPS believe that the 'delivery of a revitalised sentence planning initiative will be crucial if the SPS is to retain credibility for corporate statements and intentions.' ( SPS 1994a:1)

### **A revision of the Sentence Planning Scheme**

Following several months of discussions and research, the SPS has now revised the Sentence Planning Scheme and produced a series of principles and models which it plans to develop, test and launch over the next two years.

The new sentence planning initiative is to be based upon five key principles (Ibid., p. 1):

**Empowerment**...decisions should be made at the lowest and most appropriate level;

**Choice...** the initial choice of prison on allocation will be limited to the prison closest to the prisoners' home location, in some cases this means that the prisoner will have no choice. Thereafter the prisoners' choice will be based on 'activity' rather than location.

**Natural Migration...**as far as possible, the majority of prisoners will be located within 25-30 miles of their home location...sex offenders and vulnerable prisoners and some female prisoners will not be able to benefit from closeness to home...

**Progression...**as prisoners move through their sentences, they should be given more opportunities to exercise personal responsibilities. The system will not be based on 'materialistic progression' but one which will allow people to rehearse and develop skills within a supportive environment.

**Prisoners PDF...**this document will play a pivotal role...identifying "agreed needs" and "aggregated needs". (Ibid.:2)

The needs of the prisoner will be prioritised by the SPS in the context of his circumstances. Once security and good order have been achieved, personal safety will be regarded as the priority need for a prisoner. Once this has been met, other needs will be met such as privacy, structure, support, emotional feedback, social stimulation, activity and a degree of autonomy. (Ibid., p. 8)

The SPS states that the agreed needs will be reached 'when the Personal Officer has been satisfied that the prisoner has addressed the issues'. Aggregated needs refer to those reached

through a network of Supported Peer Group Teams (who provide a mechanism for the personal growth and development of the Officer) and are based on the aggregation of common needs across a group of prisoners...The Personal Officers will be specifying part of the establishment's regime and will be acting as 'Purchasing Agents' for services and/or facilities for prisoners. The Personal Officer's role will be focused on the personal growth and development of the prisoner. (para. 5)

It is expected that throughout each stage of the prisoner progression system, more opportunities will be available for prisoners so that they can be more involved in managing their personal responsibilities. This will mean that



regimes may change in that prisoners will be expected to do more for themselves and officers will be carrying out different duties compared to the ones that are carried out at present.

It has been agreed that the models and principles of the revised Sentence Planning Scheme will be tested at HMP Perth over the next two years, that training and development of prison officers will continue and that once the Perth Pilot has been tested and validated, the key areas will be 'cascaded' into other long term prisons. (Ibid.:3)

In line with the notion of the responsible prisoner and the concept of sentence planning, the SPS has also issued a 'Statement of Charter Standards for Prisoners' outlining its definition of a responsible prisoner and its standards of custody, good order and care. It states that a prisoner will be treated as a responsible person in the following ways

you will be held accountable for your actions;  
you will have a say in how you use your time in prison;  
you will be provided with opportunities to prepare for release through maintaining contact with your family, work, education and address your offending behaviour.

**It is up to you whether or not you benefit from these opportunities, but if you do not, you will have to live with the consequences of not doing so: that is what being responsible means. (SPS 1993a)**

The SPS has also developed a set of Operating Principles and an identified set of Values which it contends, underpins its policies, strategies and the day to day activities within each prison. In pursuit of its objectives, the SPS aims to

- discharge with integrity and professionalism its primary responsibility for the safety of the public through the secure custody of prisoners;

- provide an administration which is just, fair, consistent, open and accountable in its dealings with prisoners, the public and staff;
- provide a safe and pleasant working environment for staff and prisoners and opportunities for interesting work and personal development;
- foster good staff relations, teamwork and a spirit of shared enterprise and help staff develop their skills and abilities in support of the Service's aims;
- develop the appropriate management style, structure and systems to deliver value for money;
- devolve authority, responsibility and accountability for service delivery to the lowest possible level and,
- increase public awareness of, and involvement in, the work of the service. (SPS 1993c para. 2.4)

The operation of the SPS will be underpinned by a demonstration of the following values

**integrity, frankness and honesty** in dealing with prisoners, their families, employees of the Service and the public at large;  
**fairness and justice**, respecting the needs and rights of prisoners irrespective of their attitudes;  
**mutual support**, encouraging teamwork and commitment and eliminating tendencies to blame others for shortcomings;  
**openness** about our aspirations, our successes and our failures, coupled with a willingness to learn from our mistakes. (SPS 1994c para. 1.5)

The SPS views the Sentence Planning Initiative as the key delivery initiative for the next decade. There is much to be welcomed in the Initiative, at least in terms of its potential. The SPS are presently considering whether the Sentence Planning Initiative should be underpinned by the concept of 'Relational Justice' and it has commissioned the Relationships Foundation, a Christian research and social policy group in Cambridge, to develop a methodology for relational prison audits. It is hoped that this may be used as a management tool to assess the progress in different prison establishments in developing a 'relational' ethos between prisoners and staff. Relationships, it is argued, consist of two aspects - relational proximity (i.e., the structure of the relationship) and the quality of

the relationship and the prison audits would measure relational proximity in terms of

- Directness - the amount of face to face contact you have with someone.
- Continuity - the length of time you've known them and the regularity of the contact.
- Multiplexity - the different contexts that contribute to your knowledge of a person.
- Parity - the level of mutual respect between people.
- Commonality - the existence of a common purpose. (Relationships Foundation 1995:9)

The audit will suggest areas for review by the SPS. A recent pilot audit in Darroch Hall, the long-term prisoner hall at HMP Greenock highlighted some issues of concern which had not been recognised by the SPS but there were others which had not been addressed such as the lack of activities for prisoners at weekends, the lack of Personal Officer contact with prisoners' visitors, issues of defining the limits of confidentiality and discretion, opportunities for prisoners and staff to pursue common goals, considerations as to the type and number of prisoners within each Hall and strategies to prevent prisoners bottling up their emotions. (ibid., p. 45) It remains to be seen whether the SPS will hold other relational audits within establishments and whether areas of review will be tackled with enthusiasm and practical commitment. (see further SPS 1995:31-35)

The SPS has embarked on an ambitious policy which could be a positive one if implemented properly. The next decade will demonstrate whether their Mission, Operating Principles, Values, Staff Restructuring and the key service delivery initiative of Sentence Planning will result in the practical realisation of a radical change in Scottish penal policy. Alternatively, it could create a system which, in practice, cannot match the promises made to prisoners, staff

and the general public which are contained in the rhetoric and which, most importantly may continue to have negative effects on the lives of men and women who are imprisoned.

### **3.3 CHAPLAINCY IN CRISIS - A PERIOD OF ASSESSMENT 1987 - 1989**

After the penal crisis in the mid-eighties, the review by the SPS of its policy and practice in all penal establishments and at Headquarters extended to all ancillary services within the Service and this included a review of the chaplaincy service. It had become apparent in visits to local establishments by the Prisons Inspectorate that chaplains seemed to be experiencing varying degrees of role uncertainty, their position in the management structure was unclear.

It has become increasingly obvious that the role of Chaplaincy in the Scottish Prison Service, for a variety of reasons, has been subject to much informal change and has become confused, misconstrued by some, and is generally in need of a thorough overhaul. (HMCIP 1986 para. 1.3)

It was in this context therefore that the Prisons Inspectorate decided to produce a thematic report on Prison Chaplaincy. They did not feel in a position to comment on spiritual matters but they believed that they could comment on the organisation and management of chaplaincy.

In September 1986, letters and questionnaires from the Inspectorate were sent out to all chaplains in an effort to understand their current practice. The completed questionnaires are no longer available for analysis but governors'

views on the role of the chaplain have been recorded. They included the following

'inmates often see him as a part of the system';  
'the chaplain must be seen by all and act as a bridge - effectiveness has to be judged in everyday affairs, not by attendance on Sundays';  
'part time status restricts role';  
'their role is unclear to the majority of staff';  
'not normally considered as part of the manpower team';  
'problem of where they fit in and what is their role';  
'chaplains provide a service to the inmate perceived to be outside the authority control element...';  
'not satisfied with chaplaincy...';  
'the effectiveness of chaplains depends on their own personality and their relationships with both staff and inmates';  
'lack of training for chaplains';  
'a little disillusioned by their total lack of interest';  
'there is little demand from prisoners for chaplaincy'; (HMCIP miscellaneous paper 1987)

A representative selection of chaplains of different denominations were invited by the Inspectorate to attend a one-day workshop to explore the subjects and topics which the Inspectorate felt would be most helpful to their review. Meetings were also held with representatives of denominational church committees and with individuals who were specifically involved with chaplaincy.

Towards the end of 1986, in response to the Inspectorate Review, the Prison Chaplaincies Board decided to form a Working Party to consider on its behalf the role of chaplains. Representatives from the Roman Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church in Scotland were invited to become members of this.

The Working Party invited chaplains to address themselves to three basic questions

- what do you do as a chaplain?;
- what would you do to develop chaplaincy work?;
- are you satisfied with the present organisation of chaplaincy work?

The Working Party Report was published in 1988. (Church of Scotland 1988b)  
In terms of the role of the prison chaplain, responses revealed that as the Prisons Inspectorate had found, in some prison establishments, chaplains were uncertain about how to exercise their role effectively

In some establishments, each denominational chaplain tends to work without any clear idea to whom he is responsible...At times uncertainty has arisen about how to exercise his role within the institution...the sense of isolation is very real. (Church of Scotland 1988b:6)

The Report felt that a 'lack of corporate identity at national or local level may have led to this confusion'. (Ibid.:6) In an effort to introduce a corporate identity, as they saw it, the Report recommended that one national Prison Chaplaincy Board, representative of the main three churches in Scotland, the Church of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Church and the Scottish Episcopal Church should be established. Its duties would include:

- (a) Liaison with the Prison Department on all matters pertaining to prison chaplaincy;
- (b) Liaison with the churches on the same matters;
- (c) Oversight and co-ordination of the whole chaplaincy endeavour;
- (d) Selection and nomination of prospective chaplains to the Department;
- (e) Ensuring that all new chaplains receive induction training;
- (f) Development of national strategies for prison chaplaincy, and production of literature for use by churches, chaplains and prisoners;
- (g) Stimulating interest in the wider Church on prison ministry and the whole field of penal debate; (Ibid.:14)

It recommended that a number of full-time chaplains should be appointed (para. 2), that a team structure be set up in each establishment led by a senior chaplain (para. 3), that all establishments should have a chaplaincy centre (para. 4) and that the title of 'Chaplain' should be applied to all ministers and priests appointed by the SPS. (para. 5)

The questionnaire responses received from chaplains demonstrated a concern for prisoners, their families, prison staff and their families. Chaplains regarded themselves as the sole neutral and confidential agents in establishments, with the opportunity to 'speak the truth in love', to inmates and staff alike. They saw their major work as reactive, being available to whoever might want to speak with them, 'to loiter with intent'. Some chaplains expressed the fear that they might be regarded as a member of staff with little knowledge, experience and weight...'he no longer has the No. 3 key' wrote one chaplain (Ibid.:12). Reports of relationships with Governors and staff varied from some chaplains having an effective relationship with management to others who felt ignored by them.

Throughout the Report, the traditional priestly and pastoral models of ministry were found to be practised in establishments and the model of a future prison ministry advocated in the Report was a strongly individualistic and traditional one

seeing every prisoner as a candidate for liberation;  
teaching and showing the power of Christ to change and rebuild  
misdirected and shattered lives;  
declaring release through Christ from guilt, fear, lawlessness and  
godlessness;  
forming a nucleus of Christian worship and Christian fellowship in the  
prison; Whatever the prevailing model for sound penal policy might be,  
the fundamental belief of the Church still stands. Men and women do not  
have to remain the same as they are. Life can be different and new  
beginnings are always possible. The message of our faith is about the way



to a better life. This way is the way of Jesus Christ our Lord. The message of the chaplain is that God cares and that his representatives care. This must include the prisoner's acceptance of the truth about himself no less than the truth of God's loving care. The word of promise in the Gospel must not only speak to the new life which is offered but also to the old life which must be put away. It must emphasise that this new life cannot be found apart from Jesus Christ and cannot be lived without his help. It must address itself to the reality of sin as well as salvation and to the need for repentance no less than to the offer of forgiveness. Those who lack the motivation to build a better life and who esteem themselves of little worth must hear the message of the Gospel....The model of ministry in prison as elsewhere is the one True Minister in whose Priesthood we are given to share by the Holy Spirit. In the same way as this dictates a mission which reaches out to everyone without exception, so it also means a message which does justice to the wholeness of individuals in their relationships with God and man. (Ibid.:4)

Finally, the Report acknowledges that prison chaplaincy is not one of the church's priorities.

It is rarely written about or discussed in depth by churches...There is no evidence of any sustained interest by the Church on matters affecting prisoners and, when the Church does comment on penal issues, this comment is usually a response to some crisis in the prison system. (Ibid.:5)

### **The Prisons Inspectorate Report on Chaplaincy 1987**

In 1987, the Prisons Inspectorate produced its Report on Chaplaincy (HMCIP 1987a) as a result of the

measure of confusion, lack of organisation and misunderstanding which has existed about a role which is clearly defined in Statute and Standing Order but which in the context of the 1980's is either inappropriate or inadequate to meet the perceived needs of inmates. (Ibid.: para. 6.2)

It was felt by the Inspectorate that this lack of understanding in the role of the chaplain may have arisen as a result of the decline in the role of the church in Scottish society and the subsequent loss in status and influence of its clergy

No longer is religious office equated with power and authority although the (Prisons) Act of 1952 reflected a contemporary position where ministers and priests had a very traditional and well respected role in society at large and a historical position of status and responsibility within the penal system. (para. 2.12)

The system of recruitment for chaplains was also vague. The Inspectorate reported that there had been failure to prepare and train clergy for the role of prison chaplain

Had any such preparation and training taken place, there would necessarily have been regard to attempting to define objectives and clarifying ambivalent instructions and arrangements. As a result [*of no preparation and training*], no clear objectives for prison ministry had been defined. (para. 2.13)

### *The task of the prison chaplain*

Varying practice was found in all establishments. It was felt that pressure on the chaplain's time, lack of training and induction, lack of clarity in the specification of their tasks and an absence of any monitoring system to check on the performance of these tasks may have contributed to such varying practice. The Report identified the main tasks of prison chaplaincy as:

**Admission Interviews:** The Report recommends that all inmates should be interviewed on admission, prior to release and if practicable once each week. Admission interviewing was recognised as an area of great potential for chaplaincy activity but was an activity rarely carried out by chaplains. Many

chaplains said that 'if inmates want something they only need ask'. (para. 3.2, 3.4) The Inspectorate felt that this was not a helpful attitude and instead, they advocated admission interviews on the grounds that

when first admitted and under the initial stress of imprisonment, inmates can be particularly responsive to the understanding and caring role of the chaplains and much can be achieved in stabilising the inmate and setting him on a positive response to custody. (para. 3.4)

The Report views the chaplain has having a normalising purpose in prison, helping the offender come to terms with imprisonment, telling him the ways of the institution, encouraging the prisoner to accept the terms of his imprisonment and encouraging him to work his way through his sentence as best he could.

**Statutory Visits to inmates:** 'Chaplains have a duty laid upon them in Rule 64(i) to visit frequently inmates undergoing punishment'. (para. 3.9) The Report recognises that some chaplains might feel that a visit was necessary to check that there was any malpractice but notes that 'in the context of daily visits being required by the Governor and by the Medical Officer, such an understanding is obviously incorrect'. (para. 3.9) The Report continues

This is in our view a carry over from traditions of much earlier years when probably the visit was to do with encouraging remorse...a visit by the chaplain can be a time for self analysis and personal stocktaking and some inmates find a chaplain of assistance. In our view, there should no longer be a requirement for chaplains to visit prisoners undergoing confinement of cell but rather the emphasis to be placed on the normality of chaplains visiting prisoners undergoing such punishments. (para. 3.10)

**Chaplaincy to staff:** The Report recommends that chaplains should offer pastoral assistance to staff since

it appears to us that chaplains have a positive contribution to make in this area and it would be of benefit if some element of hourage were included in the contracts of chaplains which acknowledge this role. (paras. 3.41, 7.1)

**Participation in Parole Reports:** The Report recognised some confusion amongst chaplains as to whether they should be writing parole reports for prisoners. Some chaplains had reservations about possible role conflict. Could they, the Inspectorate asked, in all conscience, have regard to confidential information known to them solely because of their spiritual role? (para. 3.43) The Report concluded that it was helpful for a comment to be made by a chaplain where the chaplain's personal knowledge of the inmate was such that s/he would feel able to add to the body of knowledge. Such areas might be where the chaplain had been working with an individual who seemed genuinely to be trying to come to terms with his past criminal activity in the context of his faith and where the prisoner seemed to be taking stock of his life and his future. (para. 3.44)

**Keeping a Journal:** The Inspectorate found that this practice had fallen into disuse but felt that it was important that chaplains should keep a record of events - 'opinions as to the climate of the establishments and possible causes of change would be of assistance in charting the life of the establishment and attempting to understand causal factors behind periods of unrest'. (para. 3.46)

**Job Description:** It was recommended that the tasks of the chaplain be set out in a formal job description in which there would be common features relating to statute and Standing Orders. (para. 3.47) The Report envisaged a description of the chaplain's role which would include elements of pastoral care and the carrying out of statutory responsibility.

The Report recognised that the role of the chaplain could be an ambivalent one

He must operate within the parameters of a pre-set system yet in the eyes of those whom he seeks to assist, he must remain impartial and independent of that system. We believe that the role in the prisons of today requires to be updated and more appropriately structured...the range of tasks of the chaplain as contained in statute and Standing Orders needs a thorough re-examination. (para. 3.49)

In a passing reference to a possible prophetic role for chaplains, the Inspectorate wrote, 'It has been said that the chaplains are an element of conscience in establishments. If so, channels need to be established so that expression can be given to that conscience from a quite uniquely qualified resource'. (para. 4.43)

### *Carrying out the Task*

The Inspectorate found that

...chaplains generally have little involvement in the routine happenings of the establishment and their own part-time existence ... can leave them blissfully unaware of changes and happenings which can colour their own function in establishments (para. 4.38)

Strong feelings of isolation and compartmentalisation were expressed by chaplains and the Report concluded that there was no meaningful forum which chaplains might contribute along with other specialists in the SPS. (para. 4.39)

It was found that links with presbyteries, the Home Board of the Church of Scotland (now the Board of National Mission) and the appropriate representatives of bishops were very tenuous. (para. 4.4) There did not appear to be any element of support or even supervision by visits to establishments on

a regular basis. The Inspectorate felt that useful support could come from representatives of church authorities. (para. 4.41)

### *The Organisation and Administration of Chaplaincy*

The Inspectorate found from an examination of previously published annual reports of the SPS that the chaplaincy function had been administered at a clerical level (para 5.3) Any changes had been made only as a reaction to a problem or to a specific pressure. No monitoring procedures existed to enable auditing of the chaplaincy function. There had been no way of reviewing policy or philosophy in the light of contemporary developments except through the informal advisory role to the Prisons Group. (para. 5.3) which was carried out by the Governor who served on the Prison Chaplaincies Board (paras 5.3, 2.8, 2.9) Chaplaincy as a functional service resource, the Report suggested, needed to be administered at the same level as other professional services in the SPS such as psychologists, psychiatrists and teachers. (para. 5.4)

In the area of recruitment, the Report recommended that a professional head of chaplaincy should be appointed who would hold an advisory function with a measure of representational activity to develop policy and philosophy. The employment of two full-time chaplains was also recommended. Twenty five per cent of their time would be spent as operational chaplains and the remainder devoted to monitoring, appraising and advising the chaplaincy of their particular denomination in a national sense. Their task would include organising induction and training, supporting the work of chaplains, developing the function of chaplaincy and co-ordinating religious facilities in establishments. (para. 5.6)

Following the main recommendations of the Inspectorate Report and the recommendations of the Inter-Church Working Party Report, a Joint Prison Chaplaincies Board (JPCB) was established in 1989 to co-ordinate and administer all matters pertaining to the provision of chaplaincy services. The Secretary of State for Scotland at that time, the Hon. Malcolm Rifkind, in accepting the Report of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland, indicated that he preferred the establishment of a joint ecumenical board rather than the proposal of the Chief Inspector of Prisons that a full-time Head of Chaplaincy be appointed.

A Constitution was drawn up and the first meeting of the JPCB took place in the autumn of 1989. Its membership comprised three representatives from the Church of Scotland, appointed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, two representatives from the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, appointed by the Bishop's Conference of Scotland and one representative from the Scottish Episcopal Church, appointed from the Social Responsibility Committee of the Scottish Episcopal Church, one representative from the Prison Service and the two soon to be appointed full-time chaplains (*ex officio*).

### **3.4 THE JOINT PRISON CHAPLAINCIES BOARD**

The function of the JPCB was to act as an official body, approved both by the Secretary of State for Scotland and the churches, with responsibility to co-ordinate and support prison chaplaincy in Scottish prisons. The ecumenical status of the Board meant that it would function on the basis of consent and goodwill



Within the context of this process of listening, assessing and advising, it fulfils its role as the instrument of the participating denominations in serving both their interests and the well being of the chaplaincy service in Scottish prisons. (JPCB 1992 para. 1)

It listed its tasks as

- a) The oversight, co-ordination and support of chaplaincy in Scottish prisons
- b) Interviewing and recommending candidates to the Prison Service for appointment as chaplains
- c) Ensuring that all newly appointed chaplains receive induction training
- d) Organising in service training for chaplains
- e) Visiting all chaplains in their respective establishments
- f) Consulting with the churches on matters relating to prison chaplaincy
- g) Consulting with SPS on matters relating to prison chaplaincy
- h) Providing literature to prison ministry for the use of the church, chaplains, prison staff, prisoners and their families
- i) Developing and promoting national strategies for prison chaplaincy
- j) Stimulating the interest and participation of the churches in prison ministry and general issues
- k) Making an informed contribution to the debate on penal philosophy, penal reform, staff conditions and prisoners rights
- l) Reporting to the churches and the SPS on the progress of the work of prison chaplaincy (para. 3)

The mission statement of the Board was

to recruit and train chaplains for the Scottish Prison Service; to support their activities; to co-ordinate all matters concerned with the practice of religion in Scottish prisons; and to increase awareness and concern within the Churches for the ministry to the imprisoned, their families and prison staff. (para. 5)

The Policy Document set out the plans of the Board until the end of 1994

delineating the priorities it will have, the objectives it hopes to achieve, and the methods that will be employed in accomplishing its task. The Board affirms that the policies it adopts will be implemented only on the

basis of the willing co-operation and consent of working prison chaplains consistent with the ecumenical status of the Board. (para. 6)

It listed five priority areas of work - chaplaincy teams, facilities, training, resources and the wider church. (para. 7)

**Chaplaincy Teams:** The main task of the Board would be to ensure a sufficient supply of chaplains to meet the needs of those sentenced to a prison term and to establish ecumenical teams of chaplains in every prison. They would also encourage chaplains to meet regularly and

plan the most effective ways of doing the work and to work together as a team as much as possible. This approach...provides a stronger witness...it has proved more efficient and allows the chaplains to have a much greater presence and influence on the life of the prison. (para 7(a)(ii))

The Policy of the Board would encourage liaison of chaplains with management including the following elements of good communication with governor grades and access to the governor in exceptional matters, representation at Heads of Department meetings, representation at meetings of SPS Regimes Services, representation at Team briefing meetings and representation on committees which have a direct bearing on the welfare or rights of the prisoner. (para. 7(a)(iv))

**Facilities:** The Board would bring about the provision of a chaplaincy centre in each prison so that chaplains could conduct worship and perform other tasks. (para. 7(b))

**Training:** The Board would ensure that chaplains would undergo training to the degree necessary for the functions they were required to perform. All newly appointed chaplains would be given a course of induction and the Board

would produce a guide to induction training. A one-day Initial Development Course would be held each year for those who had been appointed as prison chaplains in the course of the year. On-going training in the form of a short series of one day topical courses would also be provided. (para. 7(c))

**Resources:** The Board would secure a realistic budget for its own work and for chaplaincy teams in each prison. (para. 7(d)(i))

**Communications:** The Board would distribute a memorandum about each Chaplaincy Board meeting to each Chaplaincy team and publish an occasional journal containing articles and information of interest to chaplains. All chaplains would be expected to make an annual report to the Board and it would communicate with the relevant body in each denomination with reference to nominations, demissions etc. and other matters as required. (para. 8(a))

### **Contributions to penal policy**

In terms of contributing comment to the SPS on penal philosophy and policy, since 1989, the JPCB has made contributions to only two SPS policy and/or discussion documents, 'Review of Psychiatric Services to Penal Establishments' (1991) and 'Right and Just' (1992), the revised system for dealing with prisoner's requests, complaints and grievances. In response to 'Right and Just', the JPCB made the following contribution

We feel that the document is a big step in the right direction and welcome it very strongly. We applaud the independence emphasis that is found throughout the document and feel that the principles on which it is based are very good...we consider that it would be appropriate for the church

with its emphasis on healing, reconciliation and wholeness to be represented at the National Grievance Panel. (JPCB correspondence 1992)

To date, there is no chaplaincy representative on the National Grievance Panel.

The 'key service delivery priority' for the next decade, the Sentence Planning Initiative, received the following response from the JPCB, 'the Board noted with concern that no mention of chaplaincy was included in the document'. (JPCB correspondence 1992). The Board offered no further contribution to the consultation process of the Sentence Planning Initiative.

In January 1993, the Board established a Working Party of prison chaplains to consider Scottish penal policy. The Working Party was given the following remit to consider

1. the treatment and regimes for remand prisoners
2. communication with prisoners: inconsistency in and making of decisions; lack of information or consultation about transfers and other things that affect them; lack of accountability when decisions have been made
3. orderly room procedures
4. the role of HMCIP - is it independent and does it exercise real oversight?
5. respect for prisoners in day to day relationships
6. suicide prevention procedures
7. visiting facilities and attitudes to visitors (JPCB paper 1993)

It was agreed at a preliminary meeting that all prison chaplains in the SPS would be circularised with a letter summarising these areas and requesting their comments and suggestions. It was also felt at the meeting that a special conference for chaplains and the wider church should be convened to discuss these topics and that there should be closer liaison with the SPS on the problem areas identified. Chaplains would also be encouraged to make more

representation at a local level on local issues. Four months later, the Working Party was disbanded. At the prison chaplain's conference later that year however, the JPCB was challenged by chaplains

to become more involved in penal affairs and justice issues to sensitise the wider community to prison ministry, to establish a national mission to prisons and to become more aware of and be more involved in Penal Affairs and Justice Issues. 'These have been accepted as opportunities to further develop prison chaplaincy and will be tackled with commitment and enthusiasm in the months and years ahead', the Board said. (Church of Scotland 1993:429)

### **The integration of the chaplaincy service**

The SPS' ideology of 'enterprising managerialism' has had a powerful impact on the organisation of the Scottish Prison Service. Features of this ideology include devolving centralised power, 'migration of tasks to the field', local accountability, a reduction in management levels, empowerment of staff and prisoners and a drive to value for money. (see further Adler and Longhurst 1994:214-238) This ideology has had significant implications for ancillary staff. In both the case of education officers and social workers for example, whose roles have traditionally lacked power and status within the prison, there have been 'attempts...to integrate...[them]...more effectively within the overall management of the service' (Adler and Longhurst 1994:135), perhaps because the SPS has regarded their varying degrees of independence from the system as threatening. (Ibid.:134) The example of the integration of social work could be indicative of some of the problems chaplaincy could experience as it becomes more integrated into the management structure of the SPS.

The move towards integrating the social work function more fully in the SPS began in 1989, when the Prisons Inspectorate produced a thematic report on

social work units in Scottish prisons (SPS 1989b) 'in response to the uncertainty about the place of social work in prison'. (para. 1.1.2) This report presented the results of a very detailed investigation into the role and function of social workers in the penal system and recommended that

A national framework for prison social work should be established. Such a framework should establish the overall purpose of prison social work; set policies for organisation and staffing; work to be undertaken; social work methods; premises; security; record keeping; support staff and the relationship between the role of the prison officer and that of the social workers; provide a means by which priorities are set for the different kinds of work undertaken. (para. 13.2)

This Report was followed in 1990 by 'Continuity through Co-operation (SPS 1990d), a document which outlined policy and practice guidance for social work in the Scottish prison system. This policy document, Adler and Longhurst argue, was different from the 'more critical and independent conception' advanced by the Inspectorate report. (Adler and Longhurst 1994:134) They highlight this point by referring to the way in which the policy document considers the primary role of social work within the prison

'Social work units have a particular contribution to make to the development of sentence planning, management plans and establishment prospectuses' (SPS 1989:13). With the additional proposal that many of the welfare aspects of social work could be taken on by prison officers (or dealt with by prisoners themselves over the telephone), the ground is prepared for social workers 'to undertake professional tasks' (Ibid.:18). These professional tasks seem, though, to reflect the central strategy of those in charge of managing the Prison Service rather than any 'independent' social work theory. (Adler and Longhurst 1994:135)

This view seems to be further validated by 'the commitment to deliver an 'opportunity agenda' of prisoner-related initiatives' with social workers and other prison staff, 'evaluating and reviewing the sentence planning scheme for



long-term prisoners and developing strategies and programmes for offenders with special needs'. (SPS 1994c para. 1.7) Social workers in an establishment are expected to contribute to that establishment's regime plan

through the annual submission of departmental 'management plans' which will state the aims, objectives and targets for the unit...These management plans should provide a basis by which units themselves can quantify and evaluate their achievements during the year. (SPS 1990d para. 9.2.1)

The integration of social work demonstrates how the SPS has defined social work practice in terms of its own aims and objectives and is able to control more effectively the practice of social work in the prison system. Yet social workers

come into the criminal justice system with a set of values and approaches that are intrinsic to the caring professions...The social worker is also likely to be motivated by a passion about the negative effects of imprisonment, and concern in the extent to which it is used...what he or she finds is a legal system set up to punish, a public view of anything other than prison as a soft option or a let off, and a mood which wants to turn social workers and probation officers into 'screws on wheels' - and moreover a 'screw' that carries its calculator about with it to see if it is 'worth' trying to help the person. The values of 'advising, assisting and befriending' seem to have little place in today's discourse. (Wood 1994:45)

Concurring with Wood, chaplains come into the prison system with many of the same values and approaches as social workers and given that the SPS now intends to integrate chaplaincy along with other ancillary services, what are the implications of such integration for chaplains?

At the chaplain's conference held in 1994, a senior manager in a speech about the function of chaplaincy in prisons outlined the SPS' understanding of the role and function of chaplains. He said that



chaplaincy will be regarded as a specialist 'on site' service and will be required to give service delivery and value for money. Chaplains will be considered to be specialists in guilt, in mediating unconditional forgiveness, in hope, in faith, in realism and should adopt the role of servant, a role linked to service delivery and client awareness.

This description of chaplaincy work highlights the traditional and somewhat narrow understanding which the SPS has about the ministry of chaplains. It also demonstrates attempts by the SPS to incorporate functions of chaplaincy with some of the aims and objectives of the SPS and uses language which uneasily combines managerial concepts with traditional theological concepts.

With chaplaincy set to become a specialist service within the SPS, the two full-time chaplains will become Specialist Advisors, expected to advise on the provision of chaplaincy services and operate budgetary control. They will no longer be responsible to the JPCB directly but through line management to the Area Directors of the SPS and the Director of Prisons. Part-time chaplains will now be accountable to local governors. Accountability is therefore to be transferred from the churches through the JPCB to governors and senior managers in the SPS.

In a further change to the chaplain's role and in line with a recommendation in the SPS Staffing Structure Review (SPS 1994c), chaplains' work will be formally assessed and their 'performance' as chaplains linked to pay increments. Although the JPCB has accepted this change in principle, chaplains were asked by the JPCB to give their comments on the introduction of performance-related pay for chaplains and evidence reveals that the majority of chaplains were in favour of this. Performance-related pay for chaplains will focus on 'delivery of objectives and personal achievement and it will also mean that within the process, there will be the potential to 'mark time' or indeed to lose pay if

performance fails to meet the standard required'. (SPS 1994c para. 5.16) It remains to be seen what criteria will be used to judge performance and the delivery of objectives.

Such proposed changes in the role of chaplaincy will have significant implications for the role of the JPCB. A senior manager of the SPS when interviewed for the purposes of the research expressed concern about the status of the Board in that he felt 'it provides a power base for the Church of Scotland rather than being wholly ecumenical in approach'. Other concerns expressed by other governors and senior managers who were interviewed included the view that the Board were reluctant to include the representation of other faiths and/or denominations either on the Board or through some other appropriate forum. 'The Board operates a closed shop', said one Governor-in-Charge (GIC). The SPS also believes that the Board does not have the skills necessary to manage the chaplaincy service. A senior manager who was interviewed said

The future looks bleak for chaplaincy...Because the JPCB has failed to organise chaplaincy in a more professional manner...they cannot expect many favours from the SPS. The JPCB attempts to manage chaplaincy and this is wrong. It does not have the skill to manage.

It is felt by the SPS that the pursuit of key objectives such as, 'empowerment, strategic planning processes and decentralisation will create unhelpful tensions if the Board maintains the present role and format'. (SPS correspondence 1994) If the JPCB is to have a respected and effective position within the SPS, a position it does not appear to hold at present, then the SPS believes that its remit must be to encourage churches and religious organisations on the outside to support chaplains in their work, leave the management of chaplains to those who are qualified to manage, and devolve its tasks and responsibilities. The

JPCB is, at the time of writing, vigorously resisting any major change to its role and position.

Among other concerns which the SPS has expressed about chaplaincy are the low recruitment and poor selection of chaplains, and a continued confusion amongst chaplains about their role. Some appear to work in prison to evangelise and 'missionise', others appear to offer religious ministration to church members and adherents of their particular denomination, and some attempt to address the spiritual needs of all prisoners of any denomination or none.

The plans of the SPS to incorporate the chaplaincy service within the structure of the SPS and so have a greater influence on its practice has also extended to a revision of the Prison Rules 1952 as they relate to chaplaincy. The new Prison Rules 1994 and the revised Standing Orders, which set out the SPS' operational procedures, outline a further contraction of the chaplaincy service. The new Rules indicate that prisoners are not now required, on admission, to state their religious denomination, no observance of religious or Holy Days has been recognised, there is the removal of the right of prisoners not to work on Sunday or Holy Days, there is no clearly-defined statement of the chaplain's previous right and duty to visit prisoners who are sick, in Segregation Units or in punishment blocks or confined to cells. The Rules also state that chaplains should only be visiting and spending time with prisoners of their own respective religious denomination (Rule 36(1)(a)) and that prisoners can only attend the religious services provided by the chaplain of their religious denomination (Rule 38 (1)). Prisoners may also be prevented from attending services and meetings in the interests of good order (Rule 38(2)). The chaplain is now expected to undertake *all* work and duties with the approval of the

establishment Governor and must seek the approval of the Governor for every task he/she performs. (Rules 36(1)(b)(c), (2), (3), 37, 38, 39) The JPCB was asked by the SPS to contribute to the Consultation Draft of the Prison Rules and stated that they were 'a creditable and realistic attempt to revise and update the Prison Rules (Scotland) 1952'. (JPCB correspondence 1993) They offered no comment on any of the draft rules pertaining to prisoners but did comment briefly on Rules pertaining to 'Religion in Prison'. They wanted the denomination of prisoners recorded on admission and the change of religion or denomination by a prisoner also recorded. They also wanted a clearly defined statement of the chaplain's right to visit prisoners who are sick, in Segregation Units or confined to cells and requested that the words, 'religious ministration', which they felt constituted too narrow a definition of the work of prison chaplains, should be replaced by the words 'pastoral care'.

It is evident from the moves already being made by the SPS to incorporate chaplaincy more fully into the SPS that, like social work, the SPS regards integration as a tool to control more effectively the work of chaplains. Integration will also ensure that the organisation, administration and practice of chaplaincy is more in line with the aims and objectives of the SPS and will limit to some extent, the present role of the churches represented through the JPCB.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

After the penal crisis of the mid to late 1980's, the SPS embarked on a long period of self analysis culminating in a radical rethink of its penal philosophy and practice.

The development over time of a vocabulary of reformism combining concepts of care, opportunity and individual responsibility with values of integrity, honesty, fairness, justice and respect does give the broad appearance of significant forces for positive change within the SPS and there have indeed been pockets of change and better practice. Nevertheless, such rhetoric it can be argued, rests uneasily with a system which in practice is still primarily concerned with security, control and enforced discipline of prisoners (Scruton 1991:35) rather than with notions of care and opportunity or with values of justice, integrity, fairness and respect. The major policy document, 'Opportunity and Responsibility', the Sentence Planning Scheme and the development of a Mission Statement, Operating Principles and Values evolved not because of a primary concern for the way in which prisoners had previously been treated within the system but rather because of an underlying and widespread fear amongst government ministers and SPS personnel of further unrest in prisons and the accompanying political, public and media interest - 'there will be no more burning fires in this Service', said one SPS senior manager when interviewed in the course of this research.

As the key service delivery initiative for the 1990's, the Sentence Planning Scheme has much to commend it in terms of positive possibility. Nevertheless, the initiative does raise several issues which may be worthy of further consideration. First, there seems to be, underlying the initiative, a primary element of control, 'co-operativeness is obtained from people who often have cause to be uncooperative'. (Goffman 1976:54) Amongst the group of prisoners who are eligible, there will inevitably be those who are more able to conform to the behaviour that is expected of them than others. The decision to conform or otherwise may mean an increase or decrease in the length of stay in prison and in the type of prisons in which prisoners serve their sentences. In

the area of rewards and punishments, although the SPS has indicated its intention to break up the privilege system, it appears as though places to work, places to sleep and other opportunities will become

clearly defined as places where certain kinds and levels of privilege obtain and inmates (may be)..shifted...frequently and visibly from one place to another as the administrative evidence for giving them the punishment or reward their co-operativeness warrants. (Ibid.:53)

Like the Treatment Model which dominated penal philosophy in the 1970's, the Sentence Planning Scheme focuses primarily on the prisoners' 'needs', those 'needs' being defined by the prison authorities in consultation with teams of professional experts working in the system such as social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists and trained counsellors. The Scheme forgets that

people should be punished for something they have done, not for being the kind of people they are...people could end up being detained longer than their original offence justified, on the basis that their needs have not been met and that they have not had enough time in which to act responsibly. (Wood 1991:59f)

Counselling prisoners, encouraging them to identify their 'needs', assisting them to make choices about how they carry out their sentences and supporting them through their sentence requires training in counselling for prison officers of a highly professional nature over an extended period of time. To date, the SPS envisages training in terms of short training sessions outlining the mechanics of the scheme, two-day Officer Workshops which include a short session on sentence planning, training sessions on personal officer skills and a session on sentence planning on Initial Recruit Training Courses. (SPS 1993d para. 10) There must also be a determination on behalf of the SPS to organise more efficient staffing levels in establishments - the problems of shift patterns,



escort duties, leave and sick leave must all be addressed in order for the scheme to become effective. With very limited financial resources available for the recruitment of staff and the seriously low staffing levels in some prison establishments, coupled with growing overcrowding, it is difficult to imagine how, from a personnel point of view, the scheme can be effectively implemented and administered. Substantive financial investment would also have to be made to fund better living conditions, work and educational opportunities and better recreational facilities for prisoners.

Prisoners serving four years and less who are recognised as having the highest rates of recidivism, may be given, under present and future arrangements, no opportunities under the new Initiative. At the time of writing, sex offenders, vulnerable prisoners and women prisoners cannot be included in the Sentence Planning Scheme although the SPS does intend to include these categories of prisoner at a later date. It does appear as if the vast majority of prisoners in the system will still be subject to the degrading conditions, unproductive work and limited access to education which prevail in most Scottish prisons. They will have no real choice over accommodation, association, work or movement. They will, as they do now, find it difficult to maintain and foster family and other personal relationships if this is what they wish to do and they will be unable to exercise any degree of positive control over their lives and destinies. Another issue of concern must be expressed about the treatment of remand prisoners within the Service. They live in some of the worst prison conditions in the system and as yet, the SPS has not developed a humane strategy to care for and house this category of prisoner.

Despite new initiatives, it could be argued that men and women in prison, still experience the pains of imprisonment which Sykes lists as



**The deprivation of liberty** - living in a place where freedom of movement is restricted

his freedom of movement...confined by a strict system of passes, the military formations in moving from one point within the institution to another, and the demand that he remain in his cell until given permission to do otherwise. In short, the prisoners' loss of liberty is a double one - first, by confinement to the institution and second, by confinement within the institution. (Sykes 1958:65)

### **The deprivation of goods and services**

The average inmate finds himself in a harshly Spartan environment which he defines as painfully depriving. ...It is true that the prisoners' basic material needs are met - in the sense that he does not go hungry, cold, or wet. He receives adequate medical care, and he has the opportunity for exercise. But a standard of living constructed in terms of so many calories per day, so many hours of recreation, so many cubic yards of space per individual, misses the central point when we are discussing the individual's feeling of deprivation, however useful it may be in setting minimum levels of consumption for the maintenance of health. A standard of living can be hopelessly inadequate, from the individual's viewpoint, because it bores him to death or fails to provide those subtle symbolic overtones which we invest in the world of possessions. And this is the core of the prisoner's problem in the area of goods and services. He wants - or needs...not just the so called necessities of life but also the amenities: cigarettes and liquor as well as calories, interesting foods as well as sheer bulk, individual clothing as well as adequate clothing, individual furnishings for his living quarters as well as shelter, privacy as well as space...The inmate then sees himself as having been made poor by reason of his own acts and without the rationale of compensating benefits. The failure is *his* failure in a world where control and possession of the material environment are...taken as sure indicators of a man's worth...impoverishment remains as one of the most bitter attacks on the individual's self image that our society has to offer and the prisoner cannot ignore the implications of his straitened circumstances. Whatever the discomforts and irritations of the prisoner's Spartan existence may be, he must carry the additional burden of social definitions which equate his material deprivation with personal inadequacy. (Ibid.:68f)

## **The deprivation of heterosexual relationships**

if the ...inmate is rejected and impoverished by the facts of his imprisonment, he is also figuratively castrated by his involuntary celibacy. (Ibid.:70)

**The deprivation of autonomy** in that prisoners are still subject to a vast body of rules and commands designed to control their behaviour. Prisoners will also continue to experience the deprivation of personal security (see further Sykes 1958) and will have little access to people and places in the outside world. Prisons are 'forcing houses for changing people; each is a natural experiment on what can be done to the self'. (Goffman 1968:22)

At a more fundamental level, if the SPS is genuinely committed to the philosophy and practice it currently espouses, its most difficult problem will be to change staff and prisoners' perceptions about the new philosophy and policies of the Scottish penal system. In a system which is primarily concerned with security and control, vast cultural change of the kind envisaged by the SPS is problematic. There is no wide consensus within the Service that the welfare and rehabilitation of prisoners should be one of its primary aims and many custodial staff view imprisonment as punishment and nothing more. Prison staff are expected as custodians, to distance themselves from prisoners and exercise control over them but are also expected to aid rehabilitation through building relationships with prisoners based on a set of operating principles and values which the SPS now espouses but which have little firm and/or wide consensus within the SPS. Can such values as set out in official documents really be learned by staff and prisoners within the prison environment - an environment in which prisoners are expected to live under conditions where they are under constant surveillance, where intelligence information is gathered

about them, where they are expected to conform to a comprehensive set of rules, where the telephone calls they make are recorded and where every hour of every day is organised for them? Is it realistic to expect that, in this kind of institutional climate, they will be able to develop relationships of mutual trust and respect with their jailers, with staff who hold the keys, both practically and euphemistically, to their freedom and to their progression through the system and who can discipline them formally or informally for any infringement of the Prison Rules? It appears as though prisoners, whether eligible for the Sentence Planning Scheme or not, are all dependent ultimately on the decisions made about them by those who govern the prison establishments wherein they are held.

And what of the crisis in prison chaplaincy and the efforts made to resolve it?

By 1992, all but one of the four main recommendations of the Prison Inspectorate Report were accepted and implemented. The three recommendations which were accepted and implemented were

1. undertaking a full review of contracted hours for chaplains (para. 7.1)
2. a review and update of the full range of tasks of prison chaplains and the amendments to be contained in statute and local orders (para. 7.2)
3. the establishment of an ecumenical Board coupled with the employment of two full-time chaplains. (para. 7.3).

The fourth recommendation, that a full-time head of chaplaincy be appointed was not accepted. The Report also listed twenty-four points of note which included comment on the work of chaplains: their visiting commitments (paras. 8.1,2,3,4,5), their worship commitments (paras. 8.6,7,8), the recruitment and

appointment of suitable chaplains (para. 8.15), induction training for new chaplains (para. 8.16), further training during chaplains' periods of office (para. 8.17), 'clear and regularly used channels of communication between chaplains and members of Governor grades' and 'useful support...[for chaplains]...from more regular contact with church bodies outside'. (para. 8.22)

This reform of the chaplaincy service in the Scottish prison system was regarded at the time as a very positive step towards formalising the work of prison chaplains and creating structures and channels of communication which would integrate the chaplaincy function, along with other ancillary services, within the overall aims of the SPS. The remit of the JPCB was a wide one which carried with it much responsibility and power. It was to have overall responsibility for the co-ordination and support of prison chaplaincy and this included responsibility for areas such as recruitment, training, support for chaplains, developing and promoting national strategies for prison chaplaincy, stimulating the interest and participation of the churches in prison ministry and making an informed contribution to the debate on penal philosophy, penal reform, staff conditions and prisoners rights.

By 1993, chaplaincy in Scottish prisons gave the appearance, albeit on paper, of being well structured, with clear lines of responsibility and accountability established. It appeared to have gone some way to securing a clearer definition of the role of the prison chaplain, ongoing support for chaplains had been officially recognised, training of chaplains was to be implemented and the national churches were going to become more interested in and participate more in the area of prison ministry. However, it seems clear from the evidence available that prison chaplains are facing enormous changes to their role within prison establishments. They are likely to become much less independent and

far more accountable in a prison system where the drive towards value for money is paramount and where governors and managers are having to manage on limited resources. At the same time, governors and managers are attempting to deliver different regimes and better trained personnel, and the role of the chaplain is becoming further contracted as outlined in the Prison Rules (Scotland) 1994. It could be argued that continued disorganisation, a lack of centralised and individual drive and vision and a lack of clear role definition, could lead to the further marginalisation of chaplains within the Service. Coupled with the continued diminution of the role of the three national churches in Scotland in the life of the prison population, the JPCB and chaplains must now address themselves critically to their role and the models of ministry which they practice if they are to have any relevance within a fast changing cultural and working environment.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE WORK OF THE PRISON CHAPLAIN**

After carrying out a small pilot study, a postal questionnaire on the work of the prison chaplain was sent to all chaplains in the SPS. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with a total of twelve prison chaplains who were drawn from a range of prisons in Scotland - HMP Edinburgh, Barlinnie, Shotts, Perth, Aberdeen, Inverness, Peterhead, Glenochil, Low Moss and Polmont Young Offenders Institution. The sample included both male and female chaplains from the Church of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Church and the Scottish Episcopal Church. The interviews sought to clarify some of the responses made by chaplains in the questionnaires and to discuss with chaplains some wider issues about prison ministry.

The questionnaire was designed to give respondents an opportunity to describe themselves and their work in prisons. They were asked to give some background information about themselves and their employment - their age, gender, the name and type of prison in which they worked, their religious denomination, their theological position, the hours they worked in prison, their reasons for entering prison ministry, the number of years they had spent working as prison chaplains and the number of years they had spent in the ministry of the churches of their respective denominations.

They were then asked to provide some information about their current practice of ministry in prisons and to identify which models of ministry they exercised in their work, which models of ministry they aspired to and any factors mitigating against their aspiration. They were asked about their involvement

with committees and groups in the prison establishments in which they worked, and to give details about their wider involvement in prison ministry. They were also asked to indicate their opinion of current SPS policy and operational procedures, give information on the extent of their communication with line management and governors of prison establishments and their preference or otherwise for carrying and using a pass/cell key.

The responses of chaplains to the questionnaire are set out in this chapter and some of the key points are then developed from the responses made by chaplains in interviews.

Questionnaires, each with an accompanying letter and a stamped addressed envelope were sent to eighty-eight chaplains in the SPS. They were sent to the chaplains' home addresses rather than to the prison establishments in which they worked. If questionnaires had been sent to prison establishments, there could have been no guarantee that chaplains would have received them. It was also felt that chaplains would have more time to read through the letter and questionnaire at home than in the prison where time is usually limited.

Most chaplains returned completed questionnaires within two weeks of receiving them. The chaplains who did not return questionnaires were sent a reminder letter to encourage them to reply. Those who had not returned the questionnaire within eight weeks were telephoned in a final attempt to enlist their participation. Some of them agreed to complete the questionnaire, some were unavailable and some refused to do so. One chaplain said that he 'didn't like questionnaires', another said that he 'did not have time'. One chaplain commented that he was 'not interested', others said they would return the questionnaire but did not do so. Fifty-six completed questionnaires were



returned, corresponding to a response rate of 62 per cent. Respondents represented all twenty penal establishments in Scotland.

## **PERSONAL STATISTICS/BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Chaplains are recruited from and represent the three main religious denominations in Scotland - the Church of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Church and the Scottish Episcopal Church. The denominational breakdown of respondents is detailed in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1: Denominational breakdown of respondents**

Denomination	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Church of Scotland	30	53.6
Roman Catholic Church	20	35.7
Scottish Episcopal Church	6	10.7
Total	56	100.0

Forty-four of the respondents were male and twelve were female. There were twenty-five male and five female Church of Scotland chaplains, fourteen male and six female Roman Catholic chaplains and one female and five male Scottish Episcopal chaplains. The mean age of chaplains was 49 years old. The average number of years spent working in prison chaplaincy was 3.4 years. 69 per cent of chaplains had worked three years or less in the prison system, 23 per cent had worked between four years and nine years while 7 per cent had worked between ten and seventeen years. These figures suggest a high turnover of chaplaincy staff.

During interviews with chaplains it was clear that all of them had experienced and continue to experience many frustrations and tensions in the course of their prison work. They found the work extremely stressful and isolating at times and they highlighted several reasons which they thought contributed to this stress - poor recruitment and selection criteria, lack of training in the work, very little or no support for their work in prisons from their respective denominational churches, the problematic nature of part-time ministry and the general problems arising from working in a unique and at times, difficult and dangerous working environment. Some of these reasons are briefly developed below.

## **RECRUITMENT**

Some chaplains who were interviewed criticised the procedures for recruitment. They felt that most clergy are not interested in ministering to those in prison and that very often, denominational church authorities appoint to chaplaincy posts anyone who is willing to or has been cajoled into undertaking the work rather than people who are really suited to the work. This was substantiated in the Thematic Report on Prison Chaplaincy by the Prisons Inspectorate in 1987

In the course of our inspections, we have been made aware of chaplains who would seem to have been miscast for the task through age and disposition. Some chaplains have, in the past, particularly in the case of the Roman Catholic church, been allocated quite arbitrarily and have not hidden their displeasure at being saddled with another duty. (HMCIP 1987a para. 4.5)

A chaplain working in a large prison highlighted this view when she said that

We should be far more careful about who we appoint. We should be appointing people who want to do the job for the right reasons. We have

enough problems with the caricatures of clergy on the television without adding to that image in prison. Not a lot of people care about prisons anyway and a lot of the chaplains themselves don't care. Is it just a matter of filling vacancies or are we getting the right person for the job? Some people are just not suited to the work.

A Roman Catholic chaplain with many years experience in prison chaplaincy commented that

The Inspectorate Report was quite critical of the bishops about the way in which chaplains were appointed. It's supply and demand - unlike most other jobs, nobody wants to be a chaplain in prison, so they recruit who they can.

A Church of Scotland chaplain reiterated this view when he said, 'I was appointed, it came up at presbytery. I think they were glad to find somebody who could fill the place'.

## **TRAINING**

The lack of specific 'on the job' training for chaplains was of serious concern to all those interviewed. All chaplains had received less than one hour of induction training carried out by the SPS Training Officer of their respective prison establishments and they were then expected to carry out the tasks of the chaplain without any further training. Induction training, provided by the SPS, is undertaken for all staff and volunteers and familiarises them with security matters in prisons. Any other training needs are provided by the churches in liaison with the SPS.

Prisons are unique environments in which to work. They are governed by a detailed set of rules and regulations. Physical working conditions are generally unsatisfactory and the conditions in which prisoners live and work are generally

poor. Working with prisoners can be difficult and stressful and the work requires a great deal of energy and expertise. It also requires specific knowledge and understanding about the nature of imprisonment and its effects on those who are imprisoned. All chaplains who were interviewed lamented the paucity of training opportunities for the work they were asked to undertake on behalf of the churches and the SPS. A chaplain working in a high security prison said

When I went into prison I had no specific training about prison chaplaincy. I just went in and the first training was the annual conference for chaplains. The only training the prison gave me was regarding security.

Similar comments were reiterated by other chaplains. Comments included: 'you are not given any formal training and this is a problem for a prison chaplain. Its a matter of you finding out what to do'; 'when I began...there was no training and little information or someone pointing out what was what...I was groping in the dark'.

## **SUPPORT**

A majority of the chaplains who were interviewed expressed feelings of isolation and loneliness in their work. They identified several reasons for these feelings, the primary one being that they received little or no support from their denominational churches, the JPCB or the full-time chaplains, part of whose remit is to support chaplains in the field. Chaplains felt that although their denominational church authorities had appointed them, there was very little or no interest in or support for their work. A Roman Catholic chaplain said of his church that, 'I haven't got a lot of support from my church - the church has a lot

to learn'. A female Church of Scotland chaplain said that any support she had received from her church had been 'less than tangible'. Another said that

There is a kind of false security that this part of the churches' mission is being taken care of. As soon as people come out of parish ministry to sector ministry, it is not real ministry; there isn't a sense that ministry is happening in the margins and at the front line. Ministry is about preaching the Gospel to the converted, about ministering to those who are already in, rather than taking the risk of preaching out.

Church of Scotland presbyteries were criticised for their lack of interest in and support for the work of prison chaplains. One Church of Scotland chaplain reported that

Presbytery is the place where the support could be more visible. We don't have any regular reporting to presbytery. Hospital chaplains are often mentioned but rarely prison chaplains. At one meeting when the moderator of the presbytery was thanking various clergy for their work over the year, he didn't mention prison chaplains and somebody had to remind him....'what about prison chaplains too?'

An Episcopal priest said that in his eighteen months as a chaplain 'the bishop has asked me once about my work'.

Most chaplains said that their individual church congregations accepted that part of their ministry took place in prisons but some congregations felt that they were wasting their time working in prisons or that they should be working solely in their parishes. The view was consistently expressed that in general, most church congregations were unsympathetic and condemnatory in their attitudes to and opinions about prisoners. Comments from chaplains followed a similar pattern, 'Congregations are quite vindictive about prisoners. They belong to the Sun readers' school of criminology - 'flog them and hang them'. Another chaplain claimed that his church congregation 'see prisoners as a

different species - they are aliens from another planet - that mindset doesn't shift easily'. A Church of Scotland chaplain remarked that

There is a feeling amongst some parish ministers that their congregations, or some people in their congregations, slightly resent the time they give to prison chaplaincy. It is taking away from them and giving to more undeserving people than they are. Church congregations would rather not know. People don't like to speak to you within the church setting about your work. They are slightly embarrassed if you put in the idea that they have any kind of responsibility. If it has to be done, its better done without them knowing about it. They have the slight suspicion that the chaplain is in danger of making things too soft. Woman's Guilds though are often quite responsive to appeals we make - they do that as part of their social responsibility. Generally chaplains feel that their role is slightly resented by the church at large. Prisoners often ask, 'can you not ask some of your congregation to come in?' You can't say to them 'they don't want to talk to the likes of you'.

All chaplains were unsure about the role of the JPCB and felt that it should have more contact with them than it had to date. This uncertainty about their role would have been understandable if expressed by recently recruited chaplains but those of longer service who expressed a similar view highlight a communications problem between the JPCB and chaplains in the field. A Roman Catholic chaplain expressing his disgust at their role said "I've been here two years now and I haven't seen them yet'. A chaplain of eighteen months standing remarked that 'They came to the prison once. I don't know who the folk are who are on it. I suppose they appointed me didn't they?'

Another chaplain felt that the work of the Board could not be challenged in any way: 'The Board cannot be challenged at the General Assembly (*of the Church of Scotland*) because it is now ecumenical - it doesn't belong to us any more'. All chaplains felt that the JPCB was formulating chaplaincy policy without asking for any input from chaplains in the field.

The sense of isolation felt by chaplains became more evident when all gave their views and expressed uncertainty on the role and work of the full-time

chaplains. 'I'm not sure what they are doing' said one chaplain of five years service. A colleague of several years service said that 'they seem to be involved in administration rather than with ordinary chaplains'. This view was expressed by several chaplains who were interviewed. A chaplain of very long service said 'I'm not sure what they are doing. Are they attending departmental meetings? Are they are being told by the bureaucracy that this is how they want it?' A female chaplain of long service felt they were unapproachable; 'They are high powered. If I had questions I had to ask, I would ask my fellow chaplains rather than them'. However, she did believe that full time chaplains

could pick up what is happening in other prisons - sharing out what is best in prisons. They have a role at manager level and can keep the chaplaincy profile high. If we didn't have the full-time chaplains we could be washed out at the next tide.

## **MOTIVATION FOR BECOMING A PRISON CHAPLAIN**

Respondents were asked why they had decided to become prison chaplains. From a list of six choices, 69.6 per cent reported that they were appointed by their denominational church authority, 50 per cent became a prison chaplain through hearing about the work from a colleague, 37.5 per cent were encouraged towards prison chaplaincy by their denomination, 33.9 per cent had a specific desire to be a prison chaplain and 21.4 per cent became chaplains through their previous experience of pastoral work with offenders/ex offenders and/or their families. Responses included the following comments: 'My Bishop asked me to become a prison chaplain - this was the main reason'; 'I was approached by a colleague and asked to become a prison chaplain!'; 'Bullied into it by a friend who was leaving'; 'No-one else would fill the vacancy'; 'colleague was anxious to find someone to take on the work'.



It was reasonable to expect that a large percentage of chaplains would indicate that they were appointed by their denominational church authority. Roman Catholic and Episcopal chaplains are normally appointed through their bishops who would approach clergy to ascertain either their interest or otherwise in the work and/or to advise them that they would be appointed to a vacancy in a prison near their parish. This process of selection is reflected in 75 per cent of Roman Catholic and 100 per cent of Episcopal chaplains reporting that they were appointed by their church authority.

Church of Scotland ministers/deacon/deaconess, although ultimately appointed by their church authority, apply voluntarily to local presbyteries when a vacancy occurs in prison and then undergo a standard interviewing procedure. However, people are often approached directly through a member/s of the prison committee of their local presbytery. This would seem to be substantiated by 60 per cent of Church of Scotland respondents reporting that they became prison chaplains through hearing about the work from a colleague. 46.6 per cent of them and 66.7 per cent of Episcopal chaplains also indicated that they became chaplains through a specific desire to become prison chaplains compared with only 10 per cent of Roman Catholic chaplains.

Their responses are detailed in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Reasons for becoming a prison chaplain by denomination  
(More than one reason could be chosen)**

Reason	Church of Scotland		Roman Catholic		Episcopal	
	No.	% of 30	No.	% of 20	No.	% of 6
Appointed by denominational church authority	18	60.0	15	75.0	6	100.0
Hearing about the work from a colleague	18	60.0	7	35.0	3	50.0
Encouraged by denomination	11	36.7	6	30.0	4	66.7
Desire to be a chaplain	14	46.6	2	10.0	4	66.7
Experience of pastoral work with offenders/ ex offenders	8	26.6	2	10.0	4	66.7
Number of respondents	30		20		6	

## **FULL-TIME/PART-TIME MINISTRY AND HOURS OF WORK**

Chaplaincy service in the Scottish penal system functions on a part-time basis apart from two full-time chaplains, one from the Church of Scotland and one from the Roman Catholic Church, whose primary role is to function as specialist advisers but with the additional responsibility of acting as a local chaplain within a prison establishment, for one third of their working time. Part-time chaplains can work a maximum of fourteen hours each week in prison establishments though the majority of chaplains work for much less than that. The majority of part-time chaplains, 55.6 per cent, worked between one and six hours each week in their prison establishments. 27.7 per cent worked between seven and eleven hours, and 16.7 per cent worked between twelve and fifteen hours a week. These figures exclude the hours worked by the two full-time chaplains.

Given that 82.2% of chaplains work less than twelve hours each week, these figures seem to confirm the widely held view of chaplains that the level of commitment which the denominational churches give to prison ministry is not high. Also, given the churches' commitment to other full-time and half-time chaplaincies in areas outwith parish ministry, e.g. in hospitals, universities, industry, the armed forces and schools, this indicates that they give rather a low priority to ministry in prisons. The SPS pays the salaries of chaplains and the total number of hours worked in each establishment was agreed in 1987 between the churches and the SPS. The SPS is not now in a position to offer additional hours because of financial constraints. One chaplain who was interviewed regarded this rather differently

We should have more full-time chaplains; the SPS says that it costs too much money but maybe the underlying reason is that we might be more effective. The positive power we could represent could be a nuisance to the SPS. As part-timers we get involved in very little.

The present situation means that some chaplains are contracted to work for as little as two to four hours each week, and this includes their return travelling time and some preparation time for Sunday worship in the prison. There are other chaplains who work up to fourteen hours each week, spending two full days away from their parish work.

Chaplains were unhappy about the present arrangements for part-time ministry. Of those interviewed, eleven out of twelve chaplains said that the constraints of time limited their work considerably. Comments included: 'there is a call for full-time chaplains within each prison...seven hours is not enough'. A chaplain who clearly found part-time work a frustration said

Time is a problem. It is a great frustration for me and for my own survival, I had to delineate very clearly how I could spend five hours in prison. I felt I could be there all the time.

Another chaplain argued that

It's a time issue. Six hours is what I work and I need them just to do the pastoral work. But it takes me two hours travelling time to the prison.

A former chaplain said

Part-time chaplaincies don't work too well and I would be in favour of having more full-time chaplains, with part-time support. The allocation of hours is constrained in a strange way which is unhelpful. Some people are doing fourteen hours - a lot of time away from the parish. I would like to see somebody doing a half-time job. I was just tinkering around the edges, doing my own thing but it wasn't letting me get to know the staff and prisoners very well.

The division of hours between the denominations is also a source of concern to some chaplains who feel that the Church of Scotland receives the majority allocation of hours available for chaplaincy provision in prison establishments. Some chaplains express the view that the Church of Scotland is effectively restricting chaplaincy provision through its desire to hold on to a certain number of hours and a power it has held historically as the main provider of chaplains in prisons. It was felt that because recruitment is so poor and because vacancies in prisons can sometimes be open for many months, chaplaincy hours should be available to those who are able to carry out the work, whatever their denomination, and the recruitment of chaplains, both clerical and lay, should now be open to other denominations. This was expressed by a Church of Scotland chaplain working in a large prison who said

The allocation of hours between Roman Catholic and Church of Scotland chaplains is already in favour of the Church of Scotland and it has been

said that there has to be more Church of Scotland chaplains than Roman Catholic chaplains. The official national church thing is an area of sensitivity. It is being held on to - a last bastion of this collapsing church of ours.

Another Church of Scotland chaplain said that when a vacancy occurred in a prison where he worked as a chaplain, the local presbytery said

We, the Church of Scotland have these hours to fill and we must fill them otherwise they will go to other denominations.. So what do I say? I am not a great flyer of the flag for the Church of Scotland, I find it quite parochial - in one breath my denomination wants to keep the hours for itself yet is doing very little actively about prisons. The Church of Scotland can be quite arrogant and proud in the wrong sense.

These problems of part-time ministry must have implications for the efficient organisation and practical effectiveness of prison ministry, the degree to which chaplains are likely to be involved in the life of prison establishments, and the ways in which they are likely to be regarded and consulted by prisoners and staff in the penal system.

## **OTHER WORK OF CHAPLAINS**

The part-time nature of prison ministry inevitably means that most chaplains will be engaged in other forms of ministry outwith the prison setting, usually in full-time or part-time parish ministry, but also in other institutional chaplaincies. Some may be retired ministers. In the questionnaire, chaplains were asked to give some information about their other work and this is set out in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Other work of chaplains**

Type of Work	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Parish Minister	28	52.8
Nun	5	9.4
Deacon/Deaconess	4	7.5
Retired Minister	3	5.7
Priest in religious order	5	9.4
Part-time hospital chaplain	1	1.9
Other	6	11.4
Non response	1	1.9
Number of respondents	53*	100.0

\*this figure excludes the two full-time chaplains

52.8 per cent of respondents worked as parish ministers or parish priests, of which 7.1 per cent were associate/assistant ministers in Church of Scotland parishes, 9.4 per cent were priests in Anglican/Roman Catholic religious orders. 11.4 per cent were involved in other part-time work including pastoral assistance to parishes, the spiritual welfare of people with learning difficulties and behavioural support in secondary schools. 9.4 per cent were nuns of the Roman Catholic church who also worked in parishes and/or schools, 7.5 per cent were deacon/nesses and 5.7 per cent were retired ministers. One respondent was a part-time hospital chaplain. The mean figure for the number of years spent in the service of the church was 13 years.

## **THE THEOLOGICAL POSITION OF CHAPLAINS**

It was important to determine the theological position which chaplains espoused in order to ascertain whether the positions they adopted are related to the model/s of ministry they practise and/or aspire to and if different theological

positions and resultant attitudes determine the extent of their activism and their attitudes to some of the ethical, social and political issues surrounding imprisonment.

Chaplains were asked to classify themselves according to a choice of the most commonly delineated theological positions. These are detailed below with an accompanying brief definition:

**Fundamentalist:** although this position may hold pejorative connotations for some people, the position was defined as one which would emphasise strict adherence to Scriptural orthodoxy in biblical interpretation

**Evangelical:** the main thrust of this position would be an emphasis on the sole authority of Scripture, particularly the Gospel. Adherents would attach great importance to the personal conversion of people and salvation by faith through preaching the Word of God as contained in Scripture. Within this position, there would be liberal and conservative evangelicals.

**Charismatic:** believing that the movement of the Holy Spirit will restore and re-invigorate the whole church introducing the restoration of charisma into the church.

**Conservative:** espousing a highly orthodox doctrinal position.

**Liberal:** a largely undogmatic position, believing in freedom and change within the Christian church.

**Catholic:** a largely Roman Catholic and Anglican theological position which emphasises the concept of the universal church as distinct from local Christian churches, denominations and communities.

**High Church:** this position would be employed of those who believe in a historical continuity with Catholic Christianity, giving centrality to the



sacraments and engaging in specific liturgical practices within worship. Again, there would be liberals and conservatives within this position.

Table 4.4 indicates that most clergy were able to identify themselves with one of the seven classifications offered to them.

**Table 4.4: Theological position of chaplains**

Theological Position	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Catholic	19	33.9
Liberal	15	26.8
Evangelical	8	14.3
Conservative	3	5.4
Charismatic	2	3.6
High Church Liberal	2	3.6
High Church	1	1.8
Other	5	8.9
No. of respondents	55 (1)	98.3

(1) One respondent did not reply

It is clear from Table 4.4 that a large number of chaplains (33.9 per cent) described themselves as catholic (14 male and 5 female); 26.8 per cent as liberal (10 male and 5 female); 14.3 per cent as evangelical (8 male); 5.4 per cent as conservative (3 male); 3.6 per cent as charismatic and High Church liberal respectively. One male chaplain described himself as High Church, 8.9 per cent selected the Other category which was also included in the question. They described themselves variously as eschatological, progressive, high church evangelical, special to myself, or provided no further information.

## THEOLOGICAL POSITION AND DENOMINATION

**Table 4.5: Theological position of chaplains by denomination**

Theological position	Church of Scotland		Roman Catholic		Episcopal	
	No.	% of 30	No.	% of 20	No.	% of 6
Catholic	2	6.6	15	75.0	2	33.3
Liberal	9	30.0	4	20.0	2	33.3
Evangelical	9	30.0	-	-		-
Conservative	3	10.1	-	-		-
Charismatic	2	6.6	-	-		-
High Church(1)	2	6.6	-	-		-
Other	2	6.6	1	5.0	1	16.6
High Church Liberal	1	3.3	-	-	1	16.6

(1) includes one 'conservative evangelical' and one 'liberal evangelical'

Table 4.5 details the results of a cross tabulation of denomination and theological position and indicates that Church of Scotland chaplains held various theological positions, and described themselves as liberal (30 per cent), evangelical (30 per cent), conservative (10.1 per cent), charismatic and catholic (6.6 per cent respectively) and High Church (6.6 per cent).

The Episcopal chaplains described themselves as liberal (33.3 per cent), catholic (33.3 per cent) and High Church liberal (16.6 per cent).

A majority of Roman Catholic chaplains described themselves as catholic (75 per cent) but a number regarded themselves as liberal (20 per cent).

The responses suggest that Church of Scotland chaplains are more conservative theologically than the other denominations although some clergy in all denominations hold a conservative theological position. In a cross tabulation of theological position and gender, it was interesting that the more conservative positions were selected exclusively by men. Only one female respondent chose the charismatic position. The Roman Catholic and Episcopal chaplains overwhelmingly espoused liberal and catholic theological positions, the majority of Episcopal chaplains choosing a liberal position. A high percentage of Roman Catholic chaplains chose the catholic position. Although a catholic theological position is not necessarily synonymous with being a member of the Roman Catholic church (6.6 per cent of Church of Scotland chaplains and 33.3 per cent of Episcopal chaplains chose this position) the large number of Roman Catholic chaplains who classified themselves in this way may well be indicative of the theology of their church.

## **AGE AND THEOLOGICAL POSITION**

A cross tabulation of age and theological position showed that people who described themselves theologically as conservative/evangelical/High Church evangelical were all between the ages of 30-46 years of age while those espousing a liberal position or a catholic position were evenly spread across ages 26 - 67 years. The chaplain describing himself as High Church was in the age range 50-55 years and a chaplain who described himself as High Church liberal was in the age range, 59 - 64 years of age.

## MODELS OF MINISTRY

It was hoped that the questionnaire and interview responses about models of ministry would reflect trends in the type and direction of the ministry practised by chaplains. A selection of different ideal type models of prison ministry were constructed and chaplains were asked to indicate by their responses how well each of the models most closely resembled their current practice of ministry in prison.

In constructing the ideal type models, the writer drew on her own previous experience as a prison chaplain and made reference to previous work done in this area by theologians, particularly Niebuhr (1956), Autton (1963), Faber (1971), Grainger (1979), Pattison (1980, 1982, 1994), James (1990) and Kung (1986). The models constructed by these writers however are based on hospital chaplaincy except for J.T.L. James who wrote about the three main models of ministry practised in the Canadian penitentiary system - the priestly, pastoral and prophetic models. The ideal type models of prison ministry were described in the following way:

**Model A:** A prison chaplain holds a unique place within the prison, being in the prison but not of it. He/she represents a different order and may be rather disarming in approach.

**Model B:** A prison chaplain is the independent representative of God and of the wider church in the prison and gives most importance to preaching the Word of God and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, the administration of the sacraments and bible study.

**Model C:** A prison chaplain is available as and when required, responding to requests from prisoners and holding a neutral position within the prison establishment. The chaplain has little involvement in the routine of the prison.

**Model D:** A prison chaplain maintains a critical distance from the power structures of the prison system and is thus able to reflect upon it, to become an advocate for prisoners and work for positive individual and institutional improvement/change in the prison system.

**Model E:** A prison chaplain is, primarily, a giver of care, demonstrating this through the specific functions of listening, visiting, caring and counselling with prisoners and/or staff, whether believers or not.

**Model F:** A prison chaplain is an interpreter of the prison system for prisoners. He/she is a normalising influence, helping prisoners to come to terms with their imprisonment and explaining the ways of the institution to them. He/she tries to ensure a degree of social stability within the prison.

### How Well Each Model Describes The Ministry Of Chaplains

**Table 4.6: How well each model describes the ministry of chaplains**  
*(Chaplains could choose more than one model)*

Model	Very Well		To some extent		Not at all	
	No.	%	No.	%	No	%
Model A	21	37.5	25	44.6	10	17.9
Model B	16	28.6	33	58.9	7	12.5
Model C	22	39.3	25	44.6	9	16.1
Model D	17	30.4	30	53.6	9	16.1
Model E	50	89.3	6	10.7	-	-
Model F	9	16.1	36	64.3	11	19.6

Table 4.6 reveals that 89.3 per cent of chaplains said that Model E described their ministry very well. 39.3 per cent said so of Model C, 37.5 of Model A, 30.4 per cent of Model D, 28.6 per cent of Model B and 16.1 per cent of Model F.

A cross tabulation of the models and gender indicates that 86.4 per cent of men and, significantly, 100 per cent of women chaplains found Model E conducive. Men (35 per cent) were keener on Model B than women (8.3 per cent). On the other hand, women (50 per cent) were keener on Model A than men (35 per cent).

19.6 per cent of chaplains indicated that Model F did not describe their ministry at all, 17.9 per cent said this of Model A, 16.1 per cent of Models C and D respectively, 12.5 per cent of Model B. No-one said this of Model E.

### **The Model Most Accurately Describing The Chaplains' Ministry**

After encouraging chaplains to reflect on their current practice of ministry, they were then asked to choose *one* model of ministry which most *accurately* described their ministry. A large percentage - 71.4 per cent again chose Model E, 16.1 per cent chose Model B, 5.4 per cent chose Models A and C respectively. No chaplain chose Model D or Model F.

**Table 4.7: The model most accurately describing the ministry of chaplains by denomination**

Model	Church of Scotland		Roman Catholic		Episcopal	
	No.	% of 30	No.	% of 20	No.	% of 6
Model A	1	3.3	2	10.0	-	-
Model B	7	23.3	2	10.0	-	-
Model C	2	6.7	1	5.0	-	-
Model D	-	-	-	-	-	-
Model E	19	63.3	15	75.0	6	100.0
Model F	-	-	-	-	-	-
No. of respondents	29(1)		20		6	

(1) One respondent did not answer the question

The two models chosen by most chaplains were Models E and B. The reasons for these choices are detailed below.

### *Model E*

Table 4.7 shows that 63.3 per cent of Church of Scotland chaplains, 75 per cent of Roman Catholic chaplains and 100 per cent of Episcopal chaplains identified Model E as the one most accurately describing their ministry. They spanned all age ranges but with the majority in the age range 36 - 65 years. 91.6 per cent of women chose Model E compared with 65.9 per cent of men. Those who had chosen this model and who were interviewed understood it in practice to be pastoral ministry. Chaplains held several interpretations of this model: one described it as 'loitering with intent...talking to people you have never seen before'; another described it in this way



As human beings, we are all God's children. You have to give prisoners a sense of their own worth. You also allow them to know that there are worship services and religious things. Listening, visiting, caring and counselling - I am a release for their frustrations.

This was reiterated by a chaplain of many years service who believed that his pastoral role was 'getting prisoners to learn to live a life in prison'. Likewise, a chaplain described his ministry as being 'a support to the whole establishment...you are not on one side or another'. Another chaplain thought that he was a 'sounding board' for prisoners and, like most chaplains, he saw his pastoral ministry 'on an equal footing for prisoners and staff...very few things can happen without the staff'. By contrast, a Church of Scotland chaplain described his implementation of Model E as 'trying to be there as a different person. I'm not an authoritative figure, I'm getting into relationship'. Another chaplain said 'It's about having a word, giving an account of the faith and trying to show that I care'. A female chaplain described her implementation of Model E in the following way

I was only in eight hours and was able to use the time in pastoral work and preaching when it was my turn. I am going in to *be*, not going in there to be a missionary, to save souls. I am there to help transmit the Good News whatever that means, to bring light and hope, to talk about God. Not to go with any agenda but as a messenger from a higher power if you like.

### *Model B*

Model B was chosen by 23.3 per cent of Church of Scotland chaplains (all male) compared with only 10 per cent of Roman Catholic chaplains (all male) and no Episcopal chaplains. It was chosen by older men in the 46 - 65 age range. Two chaplains who chose this model were interviewed and both thought that the conduct of public worship on Sunday at the prison was of prime importance, 'the bread and butter going on all the time.' They thought it was

important to emphasise the 'Word being preached' and to urge prisoners to attend both worship and bible study in prison. One of the chaplains thought that this would help prisoners to be rehabilitated and 'to cope with the system'.

### **Aspirations Of Ministry**

Two further questions were asked to discover if chaplains aspired to a different model of ministry from the one they were currently practising and which model of ministry they aspired to most.

The first question asked chaplains to indicate the extent to which they aspired to *each* of the models listed - a great deal, to some extent or not at all. 89.1 per cent of chaplains aspired to Model E 'a great deal' - 45.5 per cent of this figure represented Church of Scotland chaplains, 34.5 per cent were Roman Catholic and 9.1 per cent were Episcopal chaplains.

Most respondents chose a combination of models but Model E appealed to all denominations and theological positions. Given that a majority of chaplains described Model E as the model which best described their ministry and also chose it as the one they aspired to a great deal, their responses would seem to attest to many chaplains practising their type of ministry in the way they would wish although it is clear that many chaplains would wish to practise their ministry more effectively.

## **The Model Which Chaplains Aspire To Most**

Chaplains were then asked to choose one model which they *aspired to most*. Table 4.8 shows that a majority of chaplains (64.3 per cent) chose Model E - slightly less than the proportion (71.4 per cent) who said it described their ministry best. This model received about the same level of support from men (63.6 per cent) and women (66.7 per cent). Model B was chosen by 16.1 per cent of respondents, the majority of whom were Church of Scotland chaplains and all were men. 9 per cent of chaplains chose Model D, 20 per cent of whom were Roman Catholic chaplains, only one respondent was a Church of Scotland chaplain. This model was also chosen by a majority of Roman Catholic female chaplains. There were no significant differences between the age of chaplains and the models they aspired to most.

### *Model D*

9 per cent of chaplains aspired most to Model D and three of these chaplains - two Roman Catholic chaplains and one Church of Scotland chaplain - were subsequently interviewed and asked to give their reasons for aspiring to this model and to outline their understanding of this model. All of them said that they chose this model because it spoke to them of seeking and working for justice for those who were imprisoned. They believed that it was part of the chaplain's role to be aware and critical of injustices which the penal system might inflict on prisoners and 'working to get the truth in the system'. A Roman Catholic chaplain described his understanding of Model D as

Jesus came to bring Good News to the poor, to set the captives free, not necessarily prisoners but exiles. Imprisonment is a form of exile from the community and chaplaincy can raise awareness of this. That has political

and social implications and for the way in which Good News is spread to the poor and the prisoners.

Another chaplain who aspired to this model thought that

There is a powerfulness of God and we must choose to side with the estranged which we are called to do, to be alongside that struggle. This can be the experience of staff too. They can feel frustrated by the policies handed down and that they are told to implement.

It became clear that these chaplains believed that they were in prison to minister to prisoners *primarily* because they felt that prisoners had very little power and few rights in the penal system and that 'chaplains had a voice and a right to speak out on behalf of prisoners and on behalf of a sense of justice for the men and women in prison'. The only Church of Scotland chaplain who aspired to this model developed this idea of a sense of justice when he said that

This is a vital part of the chaplain's work because the prisoners are powerless. We don't have much power as chaplains but we do have a place in the system. We can bring to the notice of the top management things they have not done in a certain way. Each person is a sacred subject, a great creature of God no matter how wrong they have been. Outside attitudes and social division are also the cause of crime as well as human wickedness. When you start to degrade people calling them beasts and animals you are destroying part of your own humanity and lowering the level of the sacredness of the individual person.

Their preference for this model did not however exclude a concern for those working in the system and they were keen to stress that they were not naive or uncritical in their support for prisoners. They all hoped that they adopted a balanced approach in their work and said that although they had been an advocate for prisoners from time to time they would like to be more proactive in their work in relation to this model.

One chaplain who said that she practised Model D to some extent described Model D as an 'ambitious model. I did see part of my role as an advocate for prisoners. It is a rotten system and sometimes I felt very angry at the way officers treated prisoners and vice versa'. Another understood Model D to be, 'More political. Its not the way I am although those who carry out this model get things done. I am too busy with individuals to fight the system - its too huge and vast'. Both chaplains admitted that any advocacy they had been involved in had been minimal.

Of those chaplains who did not practise Model D at all, a chaplain of long service said dismissively

I'm not sure chaplains should be lining up with SACRO and protest groups. That is not to say I don't have views, but if you want to change the structure and actively pursue that over and against the system I think you get into a position where you don't have the pull with management which you could have.

Another chaplain remarked that

It doesn't matter what the system is. I was working in the SPS when folk on remand were locked up 23 hours a day. I could do nothing about it - the system is as it is.

**Table 4.8: The model chaplains aspire to most by denomination**

Model	Church of Scotland		Roman Catholic		Episcopal	
	No.	% of 30	No	% of 20	No.	% of 6
Model A		10.0	1	5.0	-	-
Model B	7	23.3	2	10.0	-	-
Model C	-	-	1	5.0	-	-
Model D	1	3.3	4	20.0	-	-
Model E	19	63.3	12	60.0	5	83.3
Model F	-	-	-	-	-	-

## **Mitigating Factors To An Aspiration Of Ministry**

**Table 4.9: Factors mitigating against chaplains' aspirations**  
*(Chaplains could choose more than one factor)*

Factors	No. choosing factors	Percentage of 56 respondents
Prison Rules	7	12.5
Operating Standards	11	19.6
Time	34	60.7
Lack of confidence	10	17.9
Have never thought about the model	3	5.4
Congregational disapproval	-	-
Religious convention	3	5.4

Although most chaplains appear to be fulfilling their preferred type of ministry in the way they would wish, it was thought that there may be factors which militated against them practising their ministry more effectively. This may also be the case for those who aspire to a different model from the one they are currently practising. Chaplains were therefore asked to identify from a list of factors those which militated against their aspirations. Table 4.9 shows that in line with previous comments made by chaplains who were interviewed, the

principle militating factor identified by respondents was time - 60.7 per cent of respondents said that they did not have time to practise the model they aspired to most. This is obviously related to the small number of hours chaplains are contracted to work in prisons and may also be related to the fact that some chaplains are so involved in groups and/or committees and other activities in prisons that they may find themselves diverted from practising the ministry they would like. One chaplain commented on his questionnaire that he was experiencing

a lack of time. At present I have been asked to give interviews and conduct tours of the prison and find that in the past year I have done five which means around four weeks' visits to prison have been taken up with 'public relations' at the expense of prisoner contact time.

Interviews with chaplains substantiated the significance of lack of time. Operating Standards were also cited as a problem. It was felt by some chaplains that these limited the work of chaplains in prison and to some extent, marginalised their role.

17.9 per cent of chaplains indicated that they lacked the confidence to practise the model they aspired to. This was particularly evident among those chaplains who aspired to Model D. The practice of this model required, they believed, a certain courage and determination coupled with a degree of professionalism in approach. A chaplain of many years standing who worked in a prison that experienced prison riots in the mid to late 1980's described his perceived lack of confidence when he said

I'm not a very confrontational person, so in practice I take on the pastoral role whereas I would rather in practice be much more confrontational with the system in the heart and head.



A Roman Catholic female chaplain who aspired to Model D also said that

It takes time to get confidence and to have the strength to reflect on what we see and why we see it and not just jump in too quickly. Prison is a place where you can grow in confidence.

The Church of Scotland chaplain who aspired to Model D, and who also cited a lack of confidence as a militating factor said that he had

a slight fear of conflict and confrontation which inhibited me from making a stand. I should be more confident and assertive. I have my rights to be in that place and at that time. When prisoners do bring me problems, I say I'll try to help but at the first blast of officialdom, the piles of rules and regulations, you just lack confidence to pursue it. I wish I could be more assertive. We should be because prisoners look to us to do something about things they feel powerless to change.

Most chaplains who were interviewed, whichever model they aspired to, felt that they were not naturally assertive people and that, in the prison setting, their non-assertive behaviour could mean that they were not as respected or proactive as they could be. They tended to adopt a passive role in their ministry although some did express the wish that they could be less passive. One chaplain felt that chaplaincy training might help to build confidence and knowledge and enable him to deal more effectively with the vagaries of the system and develop a better understanding of the dynamics of power within it. It is also worth noting that one chaplain felt that it was very easy in the prison setting to ignore injustices and situations where, as chaplains, they could be involved. She felt that

working in a big institution, it can be very easy to let things slide, especially if men have a reputation for being nuisances and not very nice characters. It's easy just to ignore them.

## **WORK DUTIES AND PRIORITIES**

The Prison Rules 1994 lays down that chaplains' duties include conducting religious services or meetings (Rule 36(1)(b)), the general provision of religious ministration to prisoners of their respective religious denominations (Rule 36(1)(c)) and visiting prisoners of their respective religious denominations as soon as possible after their reception into prison (Rule 36(1)(a)). Given this narrowly defined role and its emphasis on denominational ministry, the questionnaire sought to elicit some information about chaplains' duties at work.

### **Visiting**

When asked how important it was to visit prisoners of their own denomination as soon as possible after their reception into prison, less than half of respondents (41.1 per cent) replied that it was very important. Of that number, 17.9 per cent of Church of Scotland, 3.6 per cent of Episcopal chaplains and 19.6 per cent of Roman Catholic respondents thought it was very important. 25 per cent of respondents said it was fairly important, 23.2 per cent responded that it was somewhat important and 10.7 per cent said it was not important at all.

Chaplains were then asked about how important they thought it was that they spent the majority of their working time with prisoners of their own particular denomination as outlined in Prison Rules 36(1)(a)-(c). 16.6 per cent responded that it was very important, 30.4 per cent viewed it as fairly important, 17.9 per cent as somewhat important and 44.6 per cent said it was not important at all. A cross tabulation of this variable and denomination, reveals that more Church

of Scotland chaplains (56.7 per cent) than Roman Catholic chaplains (25 per cent) thought it was important.

In addition to the clearly delineated duties outlined in the Prison Rules, chaplains were asked whether or not they should make routine visits for the purpose of offering religious ministration to prisoners in segregation, under punishment, or otherwise confined to their cells. A large majority of chaplains (over 90 per cent) visited prisoners in these categories.

Chaplains were also asked if they made visits to prisoners of no religious denomination or persuasion. The Prison Rules state that chaplains should only visit prisoners of their own denomination although the Operating Standards 1995 give a broader definition of visiting duties. 67.9 per cent of chaplains however, indicated that they did visit prisoners of no religious denomination or persuasion. However, the extent and frequency of their contact with prisoners of no religious denomination or persuasion is uncertain and it is important to note that over 30 per cent of chaplains do not appear to offer a pastoral ministry to any prisoners other than those of their denomination or those who attend chapel services or express religious interest.

The Prison Rules also indicate that chaplains work in prison establishments solely to provide religious ministration to *prisoners*. However, many chaplains believe this to be too limiting a definition of their ministry in prison. Chaplains were asked therefore in the questionnaire if they regarded themselves as chaplains to, prisoners and staff, prisoners only, prisoners belonging to their denomination, the staff only or the Institution as a whole. A majority of respondents 51.8 per cent indicated that they were chaplain to prisoners and staff. 41.4 per cent responded that they saw themselves as chaplains to the

Institution as a whole. Only 3.6 per cent of chaplains respectively considered said that they were chaplain to prisoners only or to prisoners of their own denomination.

### **Involvement in prison groups and committees**

In order to assess the level of participation which chaplains have in the life of the penal institutions in which they work, they were asked to provide information about their involvement in groups and/or committees in prisons. A comprehensive list of the groups and/or committees which are to be found in most prison establishments was presented to chaplains - the Medical Review Board, the Prisoners' Grievance Panel, the Interdisciplinary Committee, the Samaritans, therapeutic groups, staff training, Heads of Department meetings, monthly Team briefings, the Prison Visiting Scheme, work with the Race Relations Officer, the Regime Services meeting, the Local Review committee and the Visiting committee. Table 4.10 indicates the percentage of chaplains involved in various groups and committees in prison establishments.

**Table 4.10: Chaplains' involvement in prison groups and committees**

Name of groups/committees	No. of chaplains	Percentage of chaplains
Team Briefings	24	42.9
Therapeutic Groups	16	28.6
Prison Visiting Scheme	13	23.2
Heads of Department meeting	7	19.6
Medical Review Board	11	19.2
Staff training	7	12.5
Local Review Committee	4	7.1
Visiting Committee	4	7.1
Prisoners' Grievance Panel	3	5.4
Race Relations	3	5.4
Interdisciplinary Committee	2	3.6
The Samaritans	1	1.8
Regime Services Meeting	-	-

Follow-up interviews with most chaplains indicate that they felt that attending and being involved in groups and/or committees in prisons was a positive contribution they could make on behalf of the church, although time was again an issue which seemed to prevent them from being very involved.

Of those who felt positively about involvement, one chaplain remarked that chaplains 'could be representing the Christian interest and the prisoner's interest'. This view was developed further by another chaplain who thought that

Chaplains should be involved in groups and committees as a presence, another dimension, with the chaplain hopefully not always being one-sided, i.e., with the prisoners.

One of the full-time chaplains felt that involvement 'raises the profile and sends the message to the prison that the chaplains are not there for religious things but are there to gain a fuller picture of prison life'. Other positive benefits perceived by chaplains included 'It gets me alongside the other professionals and it gets me in on management level'; 'If you don't go to those kind of meetings you disappear off the map and I don't think that's a good thing'; 'Attending meetings where decision-making occurs is an opportunity to bring up issues about justice - why was everybody locked up for a whole day last week for example. You might not get any answers but at least you bring them up'. Another chaplain who had attended Heads of Department meetings in his prison establishment reported

They are boring. One day the Governor was talking about the kind of trays prisoners were going to eat their dinner from. The social worker and the drugs worker and the education co-ordinator were saying 'this is trivial - could this not be resolved at another kind of meeting?' Sometimes I suppose you have to waste time on these kind of things, either to be seen at the meeting or making the contacts that you need for other things.

A Church of Scotland chaplain said that he had thought it was probably a good idea for chaplains to be involved at different levels in committees and/or groups in the prison but was now rethinking this view. One of his colleagues in the chaplaincy team sat on the local prisoner's grievance panel and said

This was a constant source of grievance for prisoners - they thought we shouldn't be involved in this kind of thing. They feel we shouldn't be too tied in with authority and they seem to value the fact that we are not really part of the authority system as governors are.

An Episcopal chaplain felt that part of the role of chaplains was

going to Heads of Department meetings. Being alongside the heads of power but reminding them of their folly. It is easy however to get all glamorous about it and say, I must be important because I get invited to Heads of Department meetings.

However, the lack of time available to chaplains for attending meetings was an ongoing frustration. A Roman Catholic chaplain commented

We could be involved with other groups in the prison - alcohol and drugs counselling but time is against us. I was invited to take part in a workshop on violence for a week. We don't have time to do this.

Another said

Christians always have to look at issues of power and why we are there. I am not involved in anything and for me its a time issue - six hours is all I have and I need them just to do the pastoral work. If I was going to be involved, it would only be if there was a positive message I could deliver, if it wasn't a power trip. It is too soft an option to shy away from the people who make the decisions and say that's nothing to do with me.

Another chaplain held a more negative view of chaplaincy involvement when he said

I don't know enough about these meetings and what goes on in them so that if we were involved in them, would it just be a courteous thing to give the chaplain an invitation but pay no heed to what he is saying because he is not trained in the system? We are coming in as chaplains, not 'genned' up in the penal system, we wouldn't have a good contribution to make - so just ignoring the chaplain would be quite valid.

42.9 per cent of respondents attended Team Briefings. These are the regular chaplaincy team meetings. There is usually a minimum of three chaplains working in each establishment - in many prisons more chaplains are employed



and all would be expected to attend regular establishment chaplaincy meetings in order to discuss a range of chaplaincy matters and in an effort to organise work on a team basis. With under half of all respondents attending these meetings, the figure suggests that the organisation of chaplaincy work in teams and regular communication between chaplains, so important in part-time ministry, is not as good as it could be. Interview responses reinforced this conclusion. Chaplains working in larger establishments tended to work more as a team with individual chaplains using their specific skills and talents in specific areas of pastoral care, but the general pattern was that team work amongst chaplains was generally poor. It was clear that there were few opportunities for chaplains to meet on a daily basis and, where chaplains did try to work in teams, there still appeared to be a lack of communication between them. An Episcopal chaplain reported that in the chaplaincy team in which he works, 'we work as a disparate group so things lie on the desk and nothing is really done as a team'. In a large prison one chaplain, who was delegated to liaise with senior management on certain matters, would rarely keep his colleagues informed about the outcome of matters raised with management. A Roman Catholic chaplain of many years service working in a large prison summed up the feelings of many chaplains, saying that

We meet as a team occasionally. After the last chaplains' conference, we decided to work as a team but so far it has been difficult getting us all together at the same time. If we worked as a team we would be seen to be doing the job that we are meant to be doing instead of separately and we could divide up the tasks more sensibly. We would be able to plan, being proactive rather than reactive.

28.6 per cent of those interviewed attended therapeutic groups. Some reported that they were involved in therapeutic work with prisoners who were HIV+ or

living with AIDS. Others were involved in drug counselling programmes. These groups would be multi-disciplinary in approach.

23.2 per cent of chaplains interviewed were involved in prison visiting schemes. Historically the chaplain established and organised the prison visiting scheme in Scottish prisons but most schemes are now organised by SPS management rather than by chaplains. Whereas at one time, all visitors would have been members of local churches, prison visitors now represent all religious denominations and none.

19.2 per cent of those interviewed were members of the Medical Review Board. The Medical Review Board is a committee set up within each establishment primarily to monitor the implementation of the Suicide Prevention Strategy of the SPS.

19.6 per cent of chaplains attended Heads of Department meetings - monthly meetings where Heads of different departments and services within the prison meet with the Governor.

7.2 per cent of those interviewed were members of Visiting Committees. Visiting Committees are described in Prison Rules 1994 as 'promoting the efficiency of the prison. (Rule No. 135(1)) The committee monitors the administration of the prison, the conditions in which prisoners live, the food and drink provided to them, and hears and investigates any complaint which a prisoner makes to the committee. The committee may also inspect personnel and prisoners' records and other prison records.

Four chaplains were members of a Local Review Committee, formally a sub-committee of the Parole Board of Scotland but disbanded in the Spring of 1995.

Three were members of the local prisoners grievance panel. A new procedure for dealing with prisoner's requests and grievances was introduced into Scottish prisons in 1994. The Prisoners Grievance Panel or Internal Complaints Committee was established to give prisoners the opportunity to appeal against a hall manager's decision on a specific complaint.

Three chaplains were involved in race relations work. Every prison has at least one Ethnic Minority Liaison Officer whose responsibilities include

monitoring the welfare and progress of prisoners of ethnic minorities, interviewing ethnic minority prisoners on admission, arranging appropriate contact between the prisoner and his/her religious representatives, ensuring proper dietary requirements are met, ...liaison with the local Racial Equality Council and Community Relations Council, supplying names and addresses of outside contacts, if required, monitoring the occurrence of any incident of a racial nature in the prison. (SPS 1994f:70)

Only one chaplain was a member of the Interdisciplinary committee. This committee comprises representatives from all sections of the staff working in prison establishments - governors, managers, medical staff, uniformed staff, social work and education staff, chaplains and psychiatric staff.

One chaplain was involved in the Samaritans, a scheme organised by the Samaritan organisation in which prisoners are trained as Samaritans and work voluntarily in prisons offering a listening ear to other prisoners.

No chaplain attended Regimes Services meetings.

Involvement in the life of the prison by chaplains was generally not very high. Some chaplains (14.3 per cent) reported that they were also involved in other activities such as the Butler Trust Scheme - a committee which gives awards to prison staff of outstanding merit, the Health and Safety Committee, the Playcare Scheme, a Groupwork Organising Committee and a support group for prisoners' families. A cross tabulation of involvement in the institution by denomination was undertaken to see if there was any significant difference in involvement denominationally. The responses revealed that there was no significant difference in the level of activity in the prison between chaplains of different denominations.

In a previous question concerned with factors militating against chaplains' aspirations of ministry, a majority of chaplains identified time as being a major inhibiting factor. Yet surprisingly in Table 4.11, a cross tabulation of involvement in establishments by the number of hours worked by chaplains in establishments each week, the responses reveal that those who worked most (12-15) hours per week in establishments were actually less involved in prison activities than those who worked fewer hours.

**Table 4.11: Chaplains' involvement in establishments by the hours of work each week**

Activity	Number of hours per week					
	1-6 hours		7-11 hours		12-15 hours	
	No.	% of 31	No.	% of 15	No.	% of 8
Team Briefing	12	38.7	7	46.6	2	25.0
Therapeutic Groups	10	32.2	3	42.8	1	12.5
Prison Visiting Scheme	7	22.5	4	26.6	-	-
Medical Review Board	6	19.3	2	13.3	1	12.5
Heads of Dept. Meeting	4	12.9	3	42.8	1	12.5
Staff Training	5	16.1	1	6.6	-	-
Local Review Committee	2	6.4	1	6.6	-	-
Visiting Committee	1	3.2	1	6.6	-	-
Prisoners' Grievance Panel	1	3.2	2	13.3	-	-
Race Relations	1	3.2	-	-	1	12.5
The Samaritans	-	-	1	6.6	-	-
Interdisciplinary Committee	1	3.2	-	-	-	-
Other	5	16.1	-	-	1	12.5

**THE WIDER PRISON MINISTRY OF CHAPLAINS**

There are other areas of prison ministry both inside and outside the prison which chaplains may be involved in. Chaplains were asked to indicate from a comprehensive list in the questionnaire which activities they were or were not involved in and to give examples of their involvement where appropriate.

**Table 4.12: The wider ministry of prison chaplains**

Activity	No. of respondents	% of 56
Encouraging church awareness	49	87.5
Advocacy for prisoners	40	71.4
Liaising with parish clergy over pastoral support for prisoners	24	66.1
Writing parole/annual reports on prisoners	33	58.9
Attending conferences on penal matters	28	50.0
Facilitating churches in developing their own local responses for prisoners and ex prisoners	37	42.9
Visiting ex prisoners/families	17	30.4
Involvement in penal reform and after care agencies for prisoners	14	25.0
Contributing to the debate on Scottish penal policy	12	21.4
Training chaplains	6	10.7

**Trying to encourage awareness in local churches about the nature and needs of those who are imprisoned.** 87.5 per cent responded positively to this item. Examples from chaplains about their work in this area included, 'Encouraging my own congregation to be involved in certain aspects of my work'; 'Through talks to guilds and presbytery'; 'Speaking to church groups'; 'I do this in Prisoners' Week'; 'I show slides of the prison at Guild Talks etc.. At every meeting I'm told of the ridiculous 'liberal and kindly way' in which prisoners are treated!'; 'Through information given to local church and specific intercessory prayer'.

The chief resource for the ethically minded minister would be his/her pulpit. The Sunday service is the central activity for churchgoers each week and the sermon or homily is one of the principal ways in which to encourage awareness among church members about the penal system and the needs of those who are

imprisoned in the light of Christian teaching and faith. An overwhelming 87.5 per cent of chaplains claimed to use their role in parishes to encourage awareness, the frequency and extent of this being unclear however. A Church of Scotland chaplain who was interviewed said that, 'I have found that the congregation are becoming more aware and having a different approach. I don't speak about the prison all the time though, that can turn them off'. A Roman Catholic chaplain said that 'others find that when they do meet a prisoner, they do realise that they are often like themselves...that doesn't mean that they can be any more understanding...'. A female chaplain described some of her congregation and some of the church groups where she had spoken about her prison work held attitudes where 'they want difficult people locked up and forgotten about...but where I was they took an interest and some people came in to the prison with me and they learned a lot. Most were willing to think a bit more about the issue'.

**Advocacy and speaking up for prisoners where and when they felt this to be necessary (71.4 per cent).** Comments from chaplains' questionnaires indicated that many understood 'advocacy and speaking up for prisoners' to mean speaking *about* prisoners and the prison to their church congregations. Responses from chaplains about their advocacy were varied - 'in our church situation'; 'To Woman's Guilds'; 'Speaking to groups..'; 'TV slots when asked, sermons...'.

There were others however, who gave specific examples of advocacy for prisoners in the prison setting - 'I speak to P.O.'s and governor staff', 'I have written to the local paper'; 'Some prisoners have such a low IQ they cannot speak up for themselves, many others are so disturbed mentally they ought not to be in prison anyway'; 'I have righted wrong judgements'; 'Speaking to



Governor about standards of care'; 'I would get involved in advocacy when prisoners appear to be vindictively treated by staff or other prisoners'; 'When a matter becomes a question of human rights and justice for an individual'; 'Speaking to staff and social workers about particular boys'; 'At local community council meetings'.

On the face of it, it would appear that some chaplains do adopt an advocacy role in the prison setting. However, interviews indicated that the frequency and extent of this work was probably fairly minimal and most chaplains interviewed took some considerable time before offering examples of their advocacy in prisons. Examples of advocacy mostly included speaking to prison officers and/or governors about prisoners who were giving chaplains cause for concern. Two female chaplains said that they had been involved in seeking proper medical care for prisoners who they believed were being given inadequate care in prison hospitals. A Roman Catholic chaplain's understanding of advocacy was described in this way 'The advocacy prisoners need is not about the prison but about getting a house, a job, making sure they pay the bills, not about what their rights are in the prison'. An Episcopal chaplain said that he tried to be balanced in any advocacy because he felt that if he became adversarial then he could lose the goodwill he had built up with staff. A chaplain with many years experience said that the chaplaincy team of which he was a member 'didn't get involved with prisoners' problems within the penal organisation'.

**Liaising with parish clergy over particular pastoral support for prisoners (66.1 per cent)** Although this was a relatively high response, it could be expected that more, if not all chaplains would be liaising with parish clergy about pastoral support of prisoners. The responses suggest that a significant

number of chaplains do not establish links with parish clergy over pastoral support and visiting of prisoners and that over 30 per cent of chaplains may be working in isolation rather than encouraging the outside faith community to become involved in their work in prison. It was evident however that most chaplains felt despondent about some of the attitudes of clergy and church congregations which they had encountered in the course of their work. One chaplain described it this way: 'there is the attitude - why do you bother with that place?'.

**Writing parole/annual review reports on prisoners (58.9 per cent).**

Chaplains who were involved in writing reports on prisoners made the following comments: 'I write reports for long term prisoners, well known to me'; 'I write very few reports'; 'I write them often but only for prisoners that I feel I know adequately'; 'I write them frequently on those I work with..'; 'Yes I do write them - I usually write I do not know or find him polite/lively at Bible Class'.

**Attending conferences on penal matters.** Although 50 per cent of respondents indicated that they attended conferences on penal matters, comments from respondents show that the majority of chaplains interpreted this question to mean that they attended annual chaplains' conferences. Only two respondents reported that they had attended conferences on penal matters in England and abroad.

**Facilitating churches in developing their own local responses to and resources for prisoners and ex-prisoners.** 42.9 per cent of respondents were involved in this activity. Given that most chaplains were working in either full-time or part-time ministry outside of their prison work, this figure may suggest that some chaplains are perhaps not keen on encouraging the outside faith community to become involved in the life of prisoners and in prison regimes despite their obvious links with the parish system of their respective churches. Of those chaplains interviewed, most said that they tried to encourage churches to develop their own local responses to and resources for prisoners and ex-prisoners but expressed a degree of futility in that they were usually met with hostility, indifference and/or vindictive attitudes amongst church members.

**Visiting ex-prisoners and/or prisoner's families and working with them in support groups or on an individual basis.** 30.4 per cent carried out visits. This figure largely represented those chaplains who indicated that they were involved with HOPE, a Christian organisation that supports prisoners' families.

**Taking part in the life of penal reform and after-care agencies for ex-offenders and their families.** Only a quarter of respondents (25 per cent) were involved in penal reform and in the work of after-care agencies for ex-offenders and their families. All of them reported that they were working for and/or supporting after-care agencies rather than involved in specific areas of penal reform. A chaplain who was interviewed described any involvement by chaplains in penal reform as 'political' and continued

Prisoners whatever you give them, want more and society will react as to whether the more is too much or too little. You are working in that context. If you get involved in changing the system you will find that you won't be able to do chaplaincy.

A Roman Catholic chaplain of many years experience remarked about prisons that

If I had any reforms to make, I'd close prisons down. Most prisoners should not be there. Then you could concentrate on the serious offenders, but I realise the political will to do that is not there, it's going Howard's way. [*This refers to The Rt. Hon. Michael Howard, the former Home Secretary.*]

**Contributing to the continuing debate on Scottish penal policy.** Although just under a quarter (21.4%) of chaplains indicated that they were contributing to the debate on Scottish penal policy, only two respondents gave specific examples of their contribution: 'through writing letters to Press, radio, interviews'; 'through personal study...'. Interviews revealed however, that contributions by chaplains to the debate on Scottish penal policy were minimal. No chaplains who were interviewed could give any examples of practical involvement in this area.

**Training chaplains, lay workers and members of staff for work with prisoners and ex prisoners.** 10.7 per cent of chaplains reported that they were involved in training. This is a very low proportion but, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the chaplaincy service currently places little emphasis on the training of chaplains. One of the full-time chaplains, part of whose remit is to organise training opportunities, was interviewed and agreed that there was little training given to chaplains due to, in his opinion, the underfunding of chaplaincy provision by the SPS and the lack of time which could be given to training by the full-time chaplains. However, there has been some attempt to organise training days and the Chaplaincy Strategic Plan for 1996/7 (SPS 1996a) indicates that one of the strategic issues for 1996/7 is the 'need to provide training and support to part-time chaplains to ensure competent and professional service delivery'. One of the key initiatives of the chaplaincy

service will be to 'provide suitable packages of training and courses appropriate to needs'.

## **THE CHAPLAINS' VIEW OF CURRENT SCOTTISH PENAL POLICY**

Given the moral and ethical elements inherent in ministry, it could be argued that chaplains cannot offer ministry in the penal system without possessing a critical awareness and understanding of how penal policy and practice affect the institution as a whole and individual prisoners and staff in particular. Lack of knowledge in this area could result in chaplains adopting a conservative role and supporting the status quo in the SPS. In relation to current penal policy therefore, the questionnaire sought to elicit chaplains' knowledge and opinion of current SPS policy. They were asked to indicate whether they approved or disapproved, were evenly divided, or held no opinion about key areas of penal policy and practice - the Prison Rules 1994, the Statement of Charter Standards for prisoners, Sentence Planning Policy, the official role of chaplain as a specialist within the SPS, the Operating Standards and Directions. An explanation of each of these terms accompanies the detailed analysis set out below.

Table 4.13 sets out their responses.

**Table 4.13 The view of chaplains on current penal policy**

Policy	Approve		Evenly Divided		Disapprove		No opinion		No knowledge or no answer	
	No.	% of 56	No.	% of 56	No.	% of 56	No.	% of 6	No.	% of 56
Prison Rules	19	33.9	14	25.0	3	5.4	8	14.3	12	21.4
Charter Standards	26	46.3	10	17.9	1	1.8	8	14.3	11	19.6
Sentence Planning	32	57.1	7	12.5	2	3.6	5	8.9	10	17.9
Chaplain as specialist	41	73.2	3	5.4	1	1.8	3	5.4	8	14.3
Operating Standards	15	26.8	20	35.7	1	1.8	19	16.1	11	19.6
Directions	27	48.2	3	5.4	1	1.8	11	19.6	14	25.0

Interviews with chaplains sought to clarify some of these responses.

***The Prison Rules:*** Although the Prison Rules which were revised in 1994, signal a further contraction of the role of the chaplaincy service within the SPS 33.9 per cent of respondents approved of the Prison Rules 1994, 25 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, 5.4 per cent of chaplains disapproved of them, 14.3 per cent expressed no opinion and 21.4 per cent did not answer the question, 12.5 per cent specifically indicating that they had no knowledge of the Prison Rules. Chaplains who were interviewed and who expressed approval of the Prison Rules commented that, 'anyone needs to work within rules; I had an input into the revision of the Rules and as far as chaplaincy is concerned, I would be fairly happy with those'. A chaplain of many years service said 'the (1952) Rules were antiquated - a revision was worthwhile', while another said, 'you need rules and I think that the rules are providing a fairly humane regime, you need these kind of things to keep control'. Other chaplains had very little knowledge about the Rules. This was explained by a chaplain working in a large prison who said

I have no opinion about the Rules. When I began I was thrown a whole pile of literature to read. If I was diligent I could have read it but I didn't. There was no training and little information. What are the Rules in certain situations, even about locking gates and who you can let through them?

A female chaplain also remarked

I don't know the Rules well enough, its one of the areas where you don't get a lot of help when you first start. What are the rules, what are the everyday regulations? The rules seem to change, no sooner do you think you know them, then they seem to be changed.

***The Charter Standards for Prisoners:*** 46.3 per cent of chaplains approved of the Charter Standards for Prisoners, a document which outlines the SPS' definition of a 'responsible' prisoner and the basic standards of custody, good order and care in the SPS. One chaplain disapproved of the document, 17.9 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, 14.3 per cent expressed no opinion and 19.6 per cent did not answer the question. Commenting on the Charter, a chaplain who was interviewed said

I have become aware that a lot of men don't read these. They do not carry a lot of weight with prisoners even though they are supposed to be for them. Most prisoners only know little bits.

Another chaplain thought they presented basic standards of care for prisoners and he felt this was important. However a Church of Scotland chaplain remarked that prisoners regarded these as 'just pieces of paper, which don't mean anything to them. There should be basic human rights for all prisoners with some power behind them'.

***Sentence Planning Policy:*** As discussed in the previous chapter, this policy is the key service delivery priority for the SPS. 57.1 per cent of respondents



approved of it, 3.6 per cent disapproved, 12.5 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, 8.9 per cent expressed no opinion and 17 per cent of chaplains did not answer the question. Interviews clarified these responses somewhat. A majority of chaplains felt that Sentence Planning had some positive elements contained within it but that, in practice, it was not working very well. All chaplains however could only speak in general terms about Sentence Planning. They felt that they lacked sufficient knowledge about it to speak knowledgeably about its positive or negative aspects.

Only one chaplain was largely dismissive of Sentence Planning saying

'Its a bit of a con', so say the prisoners. The view I have is that the SPS is going through a restructuring and to some extent Sentence Planning might be a good thing. A life sentence prisoner is not thrown in with nothing to look forward to, but you have to cut through that - all the glossy stuff - what does it really mean? You get told - 'this is where you are going next' - you say - 'I would like to stay in Aberdeen, because of the family'. They say, 'no matter how much you would like that, this is the way it will work' - there are structures which militate against sentence planning.

***The Chaplain as Specialist in the SPS:*** As discussed in the previous chapter, chaplaincy is now to be regarded as an integral part of the prison system, a specialist 'on site' service and chaplains are expected to give 'service delivery' and value for money. Perhaps rather surprisingly, 73.2 per cent of respondents indicated their approval of this concept, 1.8 per cent disapproved, 5.4 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, 5.4 per cent held no opinion and 14.3 per cent did not answer the question. Many chaplains who were interviewed thought that they were specialists in the areas of guilt and forgiveness and consequently they felt they had a distinctive role to offer the SPS. Only one chaplain did not see himself as a specialist. He believed that he

came as a sinner, as one who has failed. I come as a fellow seeker after goodness. Many prisoners think that they are right. It is difficult for them to admit guilt and so they do not see the need for forgiveness.

***Operating Standards:*** These are the operating procedures for prison regimes. These were approved by 26.8 per cent of chaplains; 1.8 per cent disapproved, 35.7 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, 16.1 per cent had no opinion, 19.6 per cent did not answer the question of which 10.7 per cent indicated that they had no knowledge of them.

***Directions:*** This procedural document, which will soon be obsolete outlines the practical implementation of the Prison Rules 1994 within establishments and was approved by 48.2 per cent of respondents, 7 per cent disapproved, 19.6 per cent had no opinion and 25 per cent did not answer the question of which 14.3 per cent of chaplains indicated that they had no knowledge of Directions.

The responses to the above questions reveal that a significant number of chaplains approve of the main aspects of current Scottish penal policy. Interviews suggested however that their knowledge of many aspects of current penal policy was very minimal and some were embarrassed about the extent of their ignorance. One female chaplain summed up the views of most chaplains who were interviewed about current penal policy by explaining 'I never understood enough to say...if I had been more involved...I would have been able to stand up to people who knew what was going on....'.

What is surprising is that in the postal survey, a significant proportion of chaplains neither agreed nor disagreed with aspects of penal policy. Many respondents held no opinion on many aspects of penal policy although there

appeared to be general approval amongst respondents for Sentence Planning Policy. It is interesting that in the Second Prison Survey 1994 (SPS 1994e), Sentence Planning was seen to be successful by only a small percentage of prisoners (18 per cent) (para. 3.89) and was not rated positively by a majority of prison staff. (paras. 4.50 - 4.53) Many chaplains gave no answers to the questions on penal policy with some indicating specifically that they had no knowledge of Operating Standards, Prison Rules and/or Directions. One can only conclude therefore that there appears to be a lack of knowledge amongst many chaplains about current penal policy and how such policy affects practice in prison. The responses to the questionnaire also suggest that many chaplains are indifferent to penal policy.

## **COMMUNICATION**

The quality of interpersonal relationships in any institutional setting can very often be determined by the degree to which people communicate with each other and particularly the way in which management and employees communicate. A series of questions, which aimed to ascertain the degree of communication between chaplains, line management and governors of prison establishments, was asked of chaplains. First they were asked to indicate how often they met with their line manager (now termed the unit manager). He/she is the person to whom chaplains are directly responsible in the prison establishment in which they work. Table 4.14 shows that 58.9 per cent of them met with him/her less than monthly. Comments from chaplains included: 'I have no idea who the line manager is', 'never so far except during Sunday worship'. 30.4 per cent said that they met with the line manager monthly, 7.1 per cent fortnightly and 3.6 per cent weekly. Interestingly, more female

chaplains maintained monthly contact with their unit managers than male chaplains.

**Table 4.14 Chaplains' communication with Line Managers**

Period of time	No.	Percentage of respondents
Weekly	2	3.6
Fortnightly	4	7.1
Monthly	17	30.4
Less often	33	58.9
Total No. of Respondents	56	100.0

Topics discussed by respondents with the unit manager included:

Arranging the chaplaincy programme	83.9 per cent
Chapel Services	73.2 per cent
Administrative matters	67.9 per cent
Prisoners	60.7 per cent
Prison Conditions	53.6 per cent
Finance	57.7 per cent
Security	39.3 per cent

Table 4.15 clearly shows that the level of communication between chaplains and governors is even less with 80.4 per cent of chaplains reporting that they met the governor of the establishment in which they worked less often than monthly.

**Table 4.15 Chaplains' communication with governors**

Time	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Weekly	2	3.6
Fortnightly	3	5.4
Monthly	6	10.7
Less often than monthly	45	80.4

Only 10.7 per cent of chaplains met the governor monthly, 5.4 per cent fortnightly and 3.6 per cent weekly. The items discussed included:

Chaplaincy programme	66.1 per cent
Prisoners	64.3 per cent
Chapel Services	60.7 per cent
Prison Conditions	53.6 per cent
Administrative Matters	44.6 per cent
Security	35.7 per cent
Finance	30.4 per cent

These figures reveal a very poor level of communication between chaplains and senior management and this was substantiated in interviews with chaplains. Chaplains had little or no contact with governors of establishments although contact with unit managers responsible for the chaplaincy function in prisons was somewhat better. Interview responses from chaplains highlighted several reasons for this lack of communication. A chaplain cited time as one reason, explaining that 'being part-time is a problem. You don't always see staff regularly. Even within the chaplaincy, communication is poor'.

A chaplain who expressed his irritation at the lack of communication described how

a governor came into our team meeting before Christmas and presented us with the Christmas Day programme for prisoners and there was no religion on it anywhere, no church service.

A chaplain working in a large prison described communication between chaplains and management as non-existent 'I never saw the line manager, never spoke to him. I have never met the governor. He never came to our chaplaincy centre or the halls'. A new chaplain remarked that

a governor has been put in charge of chaplaincy and he delegated the responsibility to a senior officer and this is working well. While some chaplains don't feel happy about dealing with an officer, the system for me is working much better. He has the answers whereas the governor did not always have them.

A female chaplain commented that in her experience she had

never said hello to the governor. He is up at the top and sees chaplaincy as very small, an insignificant contribution to the prison. We would see him lost in other matters. Managers with whom we talk do see us as a very good agency for lowering the temperature in prisons.

There may be several other reasons for the lack of communication including the staffing structure of prison establishments, the implementation of the concept of devolved responsibility and management, a lack of respect and/or mistrust between chaplains and senior management and a lack of willingness on behalf of chaplains to make contact with governors and other senior management.

## THE CARRYING OF KEYS

In prison, most staff, particularly uniformed staff, carry pass and cell keys which give them access to all parts of a prison establishment. It could be argued that the possession of these keys is highly symbolic in the prison setting. For prisoners, they may symbolise authority and the exercise of power over them by the system. Chaplains carry pass keys and some chaplains also carry cell keys which give them access to prisoners' cells. For the prisoner, this additional key can symbolise more power over them as those who use them can have free access to prisoners' living space at any time of the day or night. For some people who use them, pass/cell keys, symbolise their own authority in the prison establishment and their power over prisoners. Chaplains were asked whether they carried/used a cell and/or pass key. 87.3 per cent of respondents said that they did carry and use a key. Of that figure, 97.9 per cent said that a key gave them a degree of independence and that it aided their movement inside the prison, 93.8 percent that it aided time management and 87.5 per cent said that a key gave them better access to individual prisoners. Two chaplains commented in a similar way

The key lets uniformed staff accept me at governor rank. It's a symbol of authority to younger 'screws' so that when I ask them a question it is always answered no matter how reluctantly. Perhaps the key gives me a bit of status - I don't know if that's good or bad

Another chaplain remarked 'I feel more secure if I have a key. On the rare occasion I do not have one, I feel quite vulnerable'.

Of those chaplains who did not carry/use a cell and/or pass key (12.7 per cent), most said it was not allowed in their establishment. One chaplain said it would inhibit his ministry with prisoners and one said that carrying a key would make



him feel vulnerable. One chaplain commented that 'in one prison where I worked, I did not carry a key, so the experience was different. I certainly felt more like a prisoner!'

A majority of chaplains who were interviewed thought that carrying keys would not be viewed by prisoners in a symbolic way. Three chaplains however did have some reservations about using keys. One said that when he met new prisoners he would say to them

You have been told of your rights but if I see your rights being denied I will make sure something is done...I don't have much power here, I have a set of keys but it doesn't give me any authority.

This chaplain thought that keys might create an issue of power for some prisoners and believed that it was how he used his key that was important. In practice, some chaplains, openly display their key and chain, while others try to conceal it until it is needed. One chaplain who had worked in a high security prison and in a local prison said that in the high security prison

not having a key gave me the feeling that I was inferior to everyone else and that I was in a different category from prison officers. To some extent that wasn't a bad thing as far as prisoners were concerned because I was like them. If I had carried keys I would have been seen as an establishment person. It's not so important to have a key in a smaller prison.

Another chaplain did say that prisoners had said to him 'you've got a key - that's your badge of belonging to authority. You're not really what you are trying to be'.

## CONCLUSIONS

One can conclude that a majority of clergy became prison chaplains because they were appointed to a vacant post automatically by their bishops or were cajoled into the work by colleagues. Recruitment of clergy to prison ministry has always been and still appears to be highly problematic and must have implications for the selection criteria used by the presbyteries/bishops and the JPCB who recruit and interview prospective chaplains. In the Church of Scotland for example, a vacant post in a prison may not be filled for many months, hence chaplains' comments that they were 'bullied' into applying because no-one else would fill the vacancy.

Just under 34 per cent of chaplains had a specific desire to enter prison ministry. Specific motivation or 'calling' has to be of the utmost importance when entering any form of ministry because it normally ensures a high level of dedication and commitment which is perhaps not so apparent in those who have little or no specific motive to minister in this way. However, this is not to say that others who take on the work for different motives may not become as dedicated and committed in time as those who are 'called' to the work, but it does mean that cajoling people into the work or simply placing clergy in prisons negates the churches' own pre-requisite for entering ministry, that is, a calling from God to undertake specific forms of ministry. It seems inconsistent that the churches propound the view that people should be 'called' to parish ministry and rejects those who do not have the 'call', yet in prison ministry, the 'call' is not a pre-requisite to employment.

The SPS Chaplaincy Strategic Plan, which seeks to 'achieve the standards set out in the SPS Corporate Plan', and which was compiled by the two full-time

chaplains and the SPS with no input from local chaplains, states that one of the key initiatives of the full-time chaplains is to 'identify suitable candidates that fit criteria, recommend and interview... within a specified time' and that vacancies must be filled within two months. (SPS 1996a para. 9:C(9)) When one of the full-time chaplains was asked how he envisaged the implementation of this initiative, he replied 'with a magic wand', and continued to say that it was the intention of the full-time chaplains to inform chaplains that if they were thinking of resigning they should give the SPS and the churches as much notice as possible. There were no attempts to reduce the time it took to recruit chaplains, especially from the Church of Scotland where the recruitment procedure is particularly lengthy.

It is clear that chaplains are working under very considerable constraints of time and that they undergo little or no training. This is essential in any occupation but especially so for prison chaplaincy given the nature of the working environment. It is also clear that the level of communication between chaplains is poor with only just over 40 per cent of all respondents attending regular chaplaincy meetings. Given that apart from the two full-time national chaplains, all chaplains work part-time, often being present in the establishment on different days from each other, and that a majority only work between one and six hours each week, communication with other chaplains is clearly not as effective as it could be.

The responses suggest that many chaplains work in isolation from each other, from the system in general and in some cases, from the outside faith community too. Some chaplains are involved in various groups and/or committees in prisons although it is widely believed that, because of their lack of knowledge of and involvement in prison routine and life, they have little to offer the prison

establishment in which they work. Most chaplains maintain a very low profile in prisons and seem to think they have very little influence with management and other ancillary staff. It is disappointing to note that only seven chaplains attended Heads of Department meetings and only two attended Interdisciplinary meetings since they both provide opportunities for increasing the awareness of senior management, members of other disciplines and ancillary services about the function of chaplaincy in the prison. They are also useful for voicing specific concerns about prisoners, conditions, erratic or unfair disciplinary decisions with the governors and senior management. Attendance at these type of meetings would mean that chaplains are more likely to become part of or at least contribute to the decision-making processes within establishments and develop professional working relationships with other personnel.

Chaplains also seem to work in isolation from their denominational churches because they receive little or no support from them. Most are critical of their denominational churches and sometimes from the evidence available, it is clear that chaplains feel their work is generally undervalued, possibly misunderstood sometimes even disregarded by churches and church congregations.

Communication with governors and line managers is very poor and this must have a bearing both on the way in which chaplains are regarded by senior management and on their influence within the establishment. There is no doubt that some governors do not regard chaplains as a necessary part of prison life and communication with management who think in these terms may be difficult. Yet it would appear that some chaplains do not communicate very regularly or at all with either governors and/or unit managers and so relationships remain distant and chaplains do not earn or gain the respected and audible voice within the system that they could have - to build, foster and

maintain relationships with those who implement penal policy. The full-time chaplains indicated that the lack of communication meant that they had no input into policy-making with senior management at SPS headquarters, unless they were asked specifically by the SPS to contribute to any discussions. It was made clear however that the full-time chaplains had themselves never asked to contribute to the policy making process.

There was a common assumption among all but two chaplains interviewed that governors and other uniformed staff regarded them as 'do-gooders'. One chaplain thought that

officers have little respect for chaplains. Twenty years ago we had that respect. They think we are 'namby pamby' people now but sometimes they get that image shattered I think.

A female chaplain said that

Nobody knows quite where chaplains fit these days do they? You still have this left-over feeling about chaplains from Victorian days and some people will support this, others will not. There is a tolerance of chaplains which may be waning.

A Roman Catholic chaplain remarked that

there is a failure on the part of the institution in that most do not recognise that chaplains have a lot of experience of counselling and caring. Chaplains are not considered. Most of the staff have no idea what the chaplain is there to do, partly because the chaplain has no idea.

Similar comments were expressed by all but one chaplain who was interviewed. Despite the feelings which chaplains hold about how they are regarded by governors and staff, it could be that chaplains need to earn the respect from

management and staff in prisons and that they need to raise their profile in prison establishments so that staff know what their function is. It may also be that instead of waiting for governors or senior managers to make themselves known to chaplains, chaplains could visit them on occasion and begin to build up a relationship with those who make the decisions which detrimentally or otherwise affect people who are imprisoned.

Chaplains believe that prisoners also view them in quite a negative way. One chaplain thought that, 'whether the prisoners see us as being of any benefit is questionable. We are on the margins of most prisoners' lives unless they are trying to get something out of you'. Another remarked that he thought prisoners' views of chaplains were 'not very positive. They can become quite disillusioned at times because they see us as not being able to change anything. We don't have a tangible power base'.

In terms of the ministry which chaplains practice, the main conclusion to be drawn from the responses is that, although chaplains practice, in varying degrees, a combination of models of ministry, the great majority of them practice a pastoral model with what appears to be little or no reference to the decisions and structures of power in the prison system. Some chaplains seem to regard their role as being one which helps prisoners cope with the system of imprisonment and they may be, perhaps unwittingly, performing a legitimating function and thus being complicitous to some of the injustices of the prison system.

Just under one third of men practise the priestly model of ministry, believing that preaching the Word of God during prison worship and offering prisoners the opportunity to attend or engage in bible study is of most benefit to those

who are imprisoned. There is a suggestion in the responses from chaplains who practice this model that they tend to work too uncritically within the system. They seem to regard the personal conversion of prisoners as being the most important part of their work.

Some chaplains do aspire to a different type of ministry, especially the priestly and prophetic models of ministry, but are constrained by militating factors, such as time and, specifically in the case of the prophetic model a lack of confidence.

Those who aspired to the prophetic model expressed varying degrees of fear about practising it because they felt they were not assertive enough to confront prison governors, senior management and other prison authorities. However, they did express profound concerns about injustices in the prison system and the way in which prisoners are treated. They did not want to acquiesce to the status quo in the face of the sometimes degrading and humiliating imprisonment which those who are held captive have to endure but felt, at times, powerless to do or say anything which could perhaps change this.

Within their traditional pastoral role, the responses suggest that chaplains are largely fulfilling the functional task expected of them by the SPS in terms of worship and visiting priorities. They are, however fulfilling this role with little awareness of the theoretical and practical implications of penal policy. Most chaplains do not appear to have a critical understanding and knowledge of penal policy or an awareness of the ways in which the implementation of policy can so profoundly and often so negatively affect, the operating procedures in prison and the way in which prisoners are treated.



Significant numbers of chaplains had either no knowledge, scant knowledge, or were indifferent to the main aspects of penal policy and many did not answer the questions which sought to elicit their opinion of penal policy. The responses also reveal that, in relation to the results of the Second Prison Survey (SPS 1994e) some chaplains appear to be out of step with prisoners and staff in their assessment of certain key aspects of penal policy such as Sentence Planning, the concept of the 'responsible prisoner' and the Charter Standards for Prisoners. Some chaplains did say that they did not have time to read about current penal policy but it may be that they are simply not interested enough in penal policy to find out more about it.

The postal survey and interviews have provided a broad overview of the work of prison chaplains and highlighted some specific areas of interest and concern. In the next chapter, these responses will be linked to the responses of a sample of prisoners, prison staff, governors and senior SPS management, members of the JPCB and church representatives who have some involvement with prison chaplaincy.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **ATTITUDES TO THE MINISTRY OF CHAPLAINS**

Questionnaire responses and the follow-up interviews with chaplains summarised in the previous chapter were used to construct a factual and descriptive picture of the ministry of prison chaplains. It became clear that most chaplains practised a pastoral model of ministry but that some aspired to practise a different model of ministry. Chaplains expressed concern about current recruitment policy, the limitations of part-time chaplaincy work and the lack of training organised for them. There was considerable evidence of poor communication between chaplains themselves, between chaplains and senior management in establishments, between part-time chaplains and the full-time chaplains and the JPCB, and between chaplains and the wider church. The low level of chaplaincy input into various groups and/or committees in prison establishments was also noted, as was the lack of support given to chaplains by their denominational churches. Chaplains often had a poor self image and did not feel valued in their work. They also practised their ministry with little or no reference to the decisions and structures of power in the prison system and with little awareness of the theoretical and practical consequences of penal policy.

In order to broaden and clarify some of these issues and to gain a greater understanding of how chaplains and their work are perceived by prisoners, governors, senior management in the SPS and by church representatives, a series of interviews were conducted with these actors. In addition, focus groups were held with a sample of prisoners who came from a cross section of prisons in Scotland including a young offenders institution and a high security prison. Two focus groups were conducted in each of the three prisons, one group with prisoners who considered themselves religious and who regularly attended

chapel services, bible study classes etc., in their establishments and the other group with prisoners who did not consider themselves religious and who had had little or no direct contact with chaplains within prisons in which they were or had been held. Their age range was 17 - 56 years, they were all male and they were serving prison sentences ranging from four months to life imprisonment. Some adult offenders who participated in the focus groups had been held in different types of penal establishments in Scotland over a period of years.

Interviews were held with a small sample of governors from a cross section of prisons in Scotland, and with senior management in the SPS who either were or had previously been involved in policy making on chaplaincy. Interviews were also conducted with representative members of the JPCB and with church representatives - an Episcopal and a Roman Catholic bishop and the convener of a major social interests committee of the Church of Scotland.

## **RECRUITMENT**

Chaplains were critical of the current recruitment policy, the prevailing view being that denominational church authorities very often appointed to prison chaplaincy posts anyone who was willing or had been cajoled into undertaking the work and, as a result, did not select people who might have been more ably suited to the work.

Interviews with members of the JPCB, the body which is ultimately responsible for the recruitment of chaplains on behalf of the churches and the SPS, revealed that the recruitment of chaplains was indeed problematic. Members gave several reasons for this view. They felt that, in their experience, prison ministry

was not considered to be a fashionable form of ministry by clergy and they indicated that it was their responsibility to encourage clergy to consider prison chaplaincy as a part-time career option. This was, in any case, consistent with one of the objectives in the Strategic Plan for Chaplaincy 1996/7 which was to

promote more vigorously prison ministry to church authorities. A promotional vocational brochure is to be produced, highlighting the possibility of prison chaplaincy as a form of ministry and the importance of support from the churches for the SPS and its objectives. (SPS 1996a para.6.4)

JPCB members who were interviewed also felt that whereas part-time chaplaincy was preferable to full-time chaplaincy, clergy with demanding jobs, for example, clergy in parishes, were not always able to devote sufficient time to working as prison chaplains. This concurred with the experience of Roman Catholic and Episcopal bishops who reported that they found it difficult to find clergy to fill chaplaincy appointments, particularly in rural areas, where the choice of eligible clergy was particularly limited. Roman Catholic clergy in particular have very heavy workloads because of the declining number of men training for the priesthood and the concomitant reduction in the number of parish priests, and bishops often found it difficult to persuade parish priests to accept a prison chaplaincy appointment in the face of already demanding parish work.

In an effort to solve the problem of recruitment for Church of Scotland chaplains, and it could be argued for economic reasons also, the Church of Scotland has now begun to incorporate into the job description of some parish ministers the appointment to a local prison as prison chaplain. The salary for such an appointment is to be included in the minister's annual stipend for his parish work with no additional monies given by the Church of Scotland to pay

for additional prison chaplaincy work. This new departure in the recruitment policy for Church of Scotland chaplains has been endorsed by the JPCB but the 1995 and 1996 chaplains' conferences saw this idea as not being widely supported by existing prison chaplains.

### **Governors' views**

Although governors and senior management expressed concern at the unacceptably long period of time it sometimes took the churches and the JPCB to find and recruit chaplains, governors and senior managers who were interviewed wanted greater personal input into the appointment of chaplains to their respective establishments. As one deputy governor explained

I think that governors of establishments should be actively involved in the recruitment of chaplains. It may be that the chaplaincy board should submit a list of possible candidates. I think though that some sort of specification needs to be drawn up because prison chaplaincy work is very demanding, very stressful, particularly in a high security prison, and whereas chaplains working outwith their parishes, for example in a hospital setting, may not find that work particularly stressful and can cope with it, I think it takes a special type of person to work in a prison setting because of the demands and pressures prisoners can put on chaplains. Therefore what we need to do is clarify what are the essential elements required, and draw up some sort of specification for the job which takes account of the difficulties. This will have to be submitted to the JPCB but I think that management in establishments need to be actively involved in the final decisions as to who actually comes to work in the prison.

### **TRAINING**

Many chaplains were concerned about the lack of training they received both in the early stages of their ministry in prison and during the course of their appointment. This concern was reiterated by all prison governors and senior

management who were interviewed. One governor-in-charge (*GIC*) remarked that

I am concerned about the way some chaplains deal with particular individuals. It makes me wonder where they are coming from and how they are advised and trained and guided by their churches. There are some seriously disturbed people in prison and I do not think that some chaplains are equipped to cope and care for these kind of people.

This lack of confidence in the competence of some chaplains was echoed by other governors

There is a serious lack of professionalism amongst chaplains.

Their professional competency has to be questioned - how good are they at delivering a service?

Another *GIC* said

There is a lack of proper training - this is another thing that needs to be sorted out. Once chaplains are selected, what needs to be re-visited is the induction and refresher training which they also need to have to make sure that they, like us, do not lose sight of some of the potential dangers that are around in the day-to-day life of the prison. You can't work in a place like this without training.

Members of the JPCB however felt that the training of chaplains was adequate - it is 'a central part of the Board's task...training opportunities and encouraging team work' said one member. The Strategic Plan for Chaplaincy 1996/7 does, however, include an intention to 'organise initial and specific training courses to address their needs both as individuals and members of chaplaincy teams. This will ensure competent professional service delivery'. (SPS 1996/7a para. 6.5)

## **SUPPORT**

Chaplains said that they often felt isolated in their prison work and received little or no support from either the JPCB or the full-time chaplains. Nor did they receive adequate support from their denominational church authorities, or church congregations.

### **The JPCB**

The lack of support given to chaplains by the JPCB was illustrated by the fact that many chaplains were unsure of the role of the Board and had very little communication with members of the Board. Some chaplains did not even know the names of people who were members of the Board.

Interviews with governors and church representatives revealed that they too were unsure about the remit of the JPCB. Church representatives claimed that

We have no contact with the JPCB;

They are an isolated body;

We are not quite sure what they do. They appoint chaplains and they interview I know that, but I have had no real links with them. There is a representative from our church on the Board but that is as far as it goes. They organise Prisoners Week don't they?

Governors were equally unsure about their role and purpose. One GIC said

I am quite critical of the JPCB, I do not understand their existence and question why governors could not make their own decisions about chaplains. We do not get copies of minutes of their meetings so I don't know anything about them, there is a real information gulf. I don't know



how many governors would be interested in knowing how they operate but I would be interested.

Another GIC commented

To a certain extent, the JPCB is a very distant body. We occasionally formally communicate with them when new chaplains arrive or people leave. They communicate with us on particular events but other than that we never see any minutes of their meetings. We do not know what the issues are that they are discussing although one of our chaplains is a representative on that Board. I have no real feel of their overall remit and their future role and I believe that this needs to be clarified, much, much more definitively than it has been in the past.

The lack of role definition of the JPCB was also commented on by a senior SPS manager who said

It is not clear what their role really is. They recruit staff and have been involved in chaplains' appraisal but other than that I don't know what they do. We do need a consistency of approach on recruitment and the JPCB could provide this. But the JPCB doesn't talk our language. When they say things to us, we are asking ourselves - do they really mean that or are they meaning something else? They need to identify what their role is and quickly.

However, those members of the JPCB who were interviewed felt that they did give adequate support to prison chaplains. One Board member said

I have seen nothing to suggest that the Board's relationship with local prison chaplains is anything other than positive. I don't imagine however that we figure all that largely in the awareness of local chaplains, we are just there - its part of the church structures and the church has to have them and this is the one that pertains to their activities in prison.

When asked about the level of the Board's support for chaplains, another Board member said

The chaplains only see the Board at the annual conference and when they come to visit but I think they feel they are supported by the Board. We ask them for an annual report, and it gives them a chance to put something down on paper about their work. The Board is a kind of committee in the background which visits prison establishments every three years or so; we are around at annual conferences, we send chaplains things which may or may not be useful.

Members of the JPCB however, expressed what they perceived as the Board's own problem of identity and purpose

The churches set up the Board as an ecumenical body to relate to a highly centralised prison service before devolved responsibility was initiated. We have been trying to come to terms with a rapidly changing SPS which has a lot to be said for it but decisions are now taken locally and it has proved quite difficult to adjust to this. It could be that governors would now deal with local presbyteries and bishops but we wanted to get away from this. We feel we are a bit peripheral in the scheme of things at SPS HQ. I am not sure how we would decentralise.

Another Board member felt that

I am not sure how clear the SPS is about where the Board is in the scheme of things. Before devolved responsibility everything was centralised and the JPCB fitted in. Now it does not. We have tried to get into individual establishments but we are finding that people in them have different views of the Board. What is this Board?, they ask and, why do we have a central board when we are told that we have complete control of our own establishments.

### **The full-time chaplains**

Chaplains who were interviewed consistently expressed uncertainty about the role and function of the full-time chaplains. Governors and church representatives were equally uncertain about their role.

One church representative asked, 'What are their names? I have no contact with them - what do they do?'. Another bishop was clearer about their role, 'I think they have a pastoral and co-ordinating role - educational rather than managerial - the full-time chaplain is not a manager'.

Prison governors and senior management were critical of the full-time chaplains' role and function within the SPS. One GIC said

I do not think much of them. They only visited my previous prison once, they've never been seen here and I've been here over 6 months. I asked them if they would be interested in organising a forum to discuss chaplaincy with various people - SPS people, church representatives etc. - but nothing came of it.

A senior manager said

The full-time chaplains are supposed to fulfil a managerial role but there is a problem with this as they are also working part time as chaplains in their own establishments. They say 'we are not managers' and I suppose in some sense they are not. It is partly the fault of the SPS - we have not offered them any management support and training. We expect a lot of them but do not give them the skills to do the job. But that aside, they give the impression that they are not fully integrated into the system. In fact, they talk a completely different language from the rest of us in the SPS, they are inconsistent in their approach, they act differently and so there is a great deal of misunderstanding. In the field, with other chaplains, things are far worse.

## **FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME MINISTRY AND HOURS OF WORK**

The constraints of part-time prison ministry highlighted by chaplains were also of concern to other interviewees. Although the prevailing view was that part-time ministry was preferable to full-time ministry because it was important that chaplains were seen to come into prison as representatives of the outside

community, prisoners and governors felt that there were problems with the quantity and quality of the work which chaplains undertook as part-time members of staff.

## **Prisoners**

Prisoners felt that one of the constraints of part-time ministry meant that chaplains were not as involved in prison establishments as they would have liked them to be. It became clear that prisoners wanted to see more signs of the physical presence of chaplains. Prisoners explained

At the moment, the chaplains don't have much time and are never in here in the evening. The chaplains do not go round the halls as often as they should. You don't see their faces around a lot unless you go up to the chapel.

They need to be in more, then they would be able to develop a rapport with the prisoners. The chaplain would become a regular face whether to a believer or a non-believer.

They are half in and half out. In its present day form, the chaplain's job description is a grey area. It would be a tremendous improvement if they were full-time.

One prisoner spoke highly of a chaplain in another prison in which he had been held. This chaplain was described as young, always seen around the halls and as someone who spoke to everyone

He wasn't interested in whether you were a believer or not, he was always there to speak to anyone. He was always there and would deal with people and the shock of them being in prison better than anyone else.

## Governors

Governors were more concerned with the quality and quantity of work of chaplains. According to one GIC

It is not very clear at the moment whether the chaplains are an intrinsic part of SPS staffing. That they are part-time is one issue. I do think, however, that part-time work is important as it helps chaplains maintain a balance between their outside commitments and bringing all that's good with that into the prison and staying fresh. I always think that people who work full-time in prison can suffer from institutional inertia as much as anything else. We do not have the same sharpness of focus on a daily basis. The big advantage of being part-time is that it allows them to bring that freshness into the prison on all occasions. Although here at this prison the hourly allocation may be about right, it is how you use that time that is important and how the chaplains work as a team as well - its about team work and how they delegate the responsibilities and duties, how they effectively organise their time when they are in prison.

Another GIC said

It is important to have part-time rather than full-time chaplains but I do understand that some chaplains find it difficult to balance a parish and a prison chaplain's position. It is also about bringing the outside community into the prison - it helps to normalise the prison environment. The more people from the outside who come into a prison, the better.

Another GIC concurred with his colleague

Because the chaplain is part-time, he is seen as a member of the community coming into the prison and because of his contacts outwith the prison, he can be a good PR person for the prison but I am concerned about ministers who do not do very much in prison. Others work all the hours God gives them and then there is, for them, more pressure on their family.

## **SUPPORT FOR CHAPLAINS**

### **Denominational church authorities**

Chaplains said that their respective denominational church authorities did not support them adequately in their work and that they appeared to show little or no interest in their work. Representatives of the three main religious denominations represented in prisons who were interviewed, concurred with chaplains' views that the support given to chaplains was indeed minimal. They said that prison chaplaincy was an area of ministry which had been neglected by the churches and church authorities and that their support for chaplains could be more tangible. The Church of Scotland representative said that neither she nor the committee of which she is convenor, had any dialogue with chaplains unless a prison chaplain or a retired prison chaplain was a member of her committee or if her committee was undertaking research into crime and punishment issues.

A bishop from the Roman Catholic church said

We give the minimum level of support to prison chaplains but I would expect the full-time chaplains to give them the support they need. However, I know our support could be much better.

The Scottish Episcopal Church appears to offer more tangible support to its chaplains. An Episcopal bishop said

I conduct an annual review with chaplains each year and visit the prisons in my diocese where there are Episcopal chaplains. Every three years there is a re-appointment appraisal with them. On our social responsibility committee there is someone who represents prison chaplains so they would have a channel into the structure of the church

through this person. How far it gets into the pews is a different matter. I would hope that chaplains would be generally keen to involve me in their prison work. I think that just being there as a bishop gives chaplains' ministry a positive value.

## **Church congregations**

The allegedly negative attitudes of many church congregations towards prisoners and towards the work of prison chaplains was confirmed by church representatives. One bishop said

There is much ignorance about prisons. They read in the tabloid media about 'sex beasts' for example. Its so degrading and I think people realise this but they still read such things. They are glad that there are such places as prisons and so think they don't have to worry. Congregations should receive more education about prisons and what they are about.

Another bishop commented

If congregations have a prison in their area, they are usually more understanding. Views are more reactionary in places where there is no prison. Several priests of ours have used prisoners in a community role on work placements, there are also Christian prison visitors. So some congregations are seeking to respond positively but it would be difficult to gauge their political attitudes to the prison and the prisoner.

The Church of Scotland representative said that

We don't really know about the attitudes of church congregations. The Church and Nation Committee produced a report on prisons in 1994 and the church produced a discussion sheet about it and this was taken up by congregations but we didn't ask for feedback. Feedback is still at the level of hoping that people will write to us, but church members should be more aware of what is happening in prisons - we should be taking it on board in our own churches.



## THE ROLE OF THE PRISON CHAPLAIN AND MODELS OF MINISTRY

All interviewees were initially asked to describe in a general way, how they understood the role of the chaplain in prison. Their comments were varied and are outlined below.

### Prisoners

Prisoners' understanding of the role of the chaplain was largely determined by whether or not they thought of themselves as religious in the conventional sense. Prisoners who said they were religious described the role of chaplains in these ways

If you need someone to talk to they are there. They try and help as much as possible and they try and teach a wee bit about the religious side.

In general, they are very helpful. They help you spiritually.

They're just there because you are entitled to go to church and to chapel and that's what they are there for.

They are there to listen although they can be limited in their approach.

Prisoners who did not consider themselves religious in the conventional sense and who had little or no links with chaplains thought differently

They deliver sermons and preach.

I just see them bouncing about and not doing much. We don't have contact with them because we're not religious. There used to be much more contact with them when you first came into prison, not now.

They don't do a lot - drink cups of tea, read the Bible, see you for induction on your first day. You don't see them after your induction unless you request to see them.

They're on a different planet. They don't understand us. I don't understand them. They think everything is solved by God - be religious and your problems will be solved - but life's not like that. God's not exactly going to give you a 'lib' date.

It is perhaps worth noting that a majority of prisoners also expressed concern about the age of chaplains. One prisoner summed up the prevailing view

They are all old - they all seem to be sixty or seventy. We need younger ones. If there was someone in the forty to fifty age group, then you could maybe sit and talk to them. They don't have a sort of presence, they just keep their heads down.

## **Governors**

Governors generally thought that chaplains offered spiritual welfare and guidance to religious prisoners, engaged in pastoral work with them and conducted religious services.

One governor described his understanding of the role of the chaplain as

providing the opportunity to individuals to make themselves known if they are religious on the outside and for others to use them as a resource, to try and do something about the issues and conflicts they have with their own religious beliefs once they are inside.

A deputy governor said

The traditional spiritual role is very important to chaplains and to those prisoners who are believers. That still remains an important focus of the prison chaplaincy and I think that sometimes we can be in danger of losing that purpose.

## **Church representatives**

Responses from this group of interviewees were fairly similar

A chaplain is someone who has a pastoral role to prisoners and staff. Prison challenges people's whole value systems and chaplains are an important support for prisoners who are questioning their value systems and theology. Prisons have a mainly rehabilitative function for the prisoners and they have to start thinking where they start fitting into the community and the chaplain could help them explore this together with punishment and salvation.

Another commented

The chaplain has a ministry of presence in the prison - a theology of presence rather than a theology of proclamation. It is important to have a chaplain in prison because they represent something of the Christian gospel - liturgical, pastoral, teaching - in all these things they will express something of God's presence.

## **MODELS OF MINISTRY**

In an effort to clarify interviewees' descriptions of the role of the prison chaplain, they were then asked to choose the model of ministry which *most closely* described their understanding of the ministry of chaplains. Prisoners and governors were asked to choose the model which most *closely* described their understanding of the ministry of chaplains in their respective establishments. Concurring broadly with the responses of chaplains, everyone who was interviewed, apart from the prisoners and governors felt that the pastoral model (Model E) most closely described their understanding of prison ministry. It was felt however, that the practice of this model was perhaps too

limiting in that chaplains probably practised a combination of models, but with a particular emphasis on the pastoral model.

Only two participants from the prisoners' focus groups chose the pastoral model. All other prisoners and governors who were interviewed chose Model F, a model which had been chosen by some chaplains who said they practised it very well (16.1%) or practised it to some extent (64.3%) but not chosen by any chaplains as the model which most accurately described their ministry in prison. Prisoners and governors chose Model F (*a prison chaplain is an interpreter of the prison system for prisoners. He/she is a normalising influence, helping prisoners come to terms with their imprisonment and explain the ways of the institution to them. He/she tries to ensure a degree of social stability within the prison*), as being an accurate description of their direct experience of chaplains' work in prisons. The priestly model (Model B) was not chosen by any respondents although one governor did say that in his experience, he had met two chaplains whom he thought probably practised this model.

Prisoners and governors' views on the prophetic model (Model D) were of interest. Questionnaire responses had indicated that 30.4% of chaplains practised the prophetic model very well and 53.6% practised it to some extent. These responses were not borne out however by prisoners' experiences of the ministry of chaplains.

## **Prisoners**

Religious and non-religious prisoners who were interviewed, expressed the view that chaplains, in their opinion, did not practice the prophetic model.

Some prisoners felt that chaplains might be inhibited from practising this model because they had to adhere to the terms of the Official Secrets Act. Others felt that chaplains were constrained by aspects of current penal policy, which in their minds, related to the implementation of stricter security measures. Prisoners were very vociferous in expressing their views about the prophetic role of chaplains and some of their views are given below

If you were in a position where you were being unjustly treated, I think at one time they (*chaplains*) had the ability to put your point of view or speak on your behalf, but I think that has vastly lessened now. They are only there to comfort some guys who turn to religion.

The chaplains do not get involved at all. They just do not want to know if you have a grievance. The chaplain should be there to see that the truth prevails. He should be a force of goodness.

I think the chaplain should be looking for the truth, whether it be a prisoner or a member of staff who has suffered an injustice. They should have the power to say, 'this is wrong'

I'd have much more respect for them if they did something but they wouldn't be here - the authorities would get rid of them like that doctor in Barlinnie who was removed for commenting on the fact that a man had been beaten up.

At the end of the day if you did go and tell them about an injustice, what are they going to do? In Glenochil when you were getting battered by the screws, they came round to see you but they were not interested.

No, the chaplain can't sort out a problem I have with staff. They do pray for us though.

I remember when one of the guys in our dorm was raped and then committed suicide because he couldn't live with what had happened to him, the screws just turned a blind eye at the time when it was going on. The chaplains knew what had happened but at the inquest none of them spoke up about what had really happened to that guy. They just kept their mouths shut.

Model D? - its not going to happen. You don't want things kept inside the prison. If there are problems you want the papers to know and chaplains aren't going to do that.

A dialogue between two prisoners revealed their experience of the non-prophetic action of one chaplain

*Prisoner A.* If a chaplain sees a screw doing something, then he has to report it - its his job.

*Prisoner B.* But what happened to you when you were locked up in the Wendy House with that priest? He saw you with broken arms assaulted by staff in a hostage situation, and he said there was nothing he could do about it.

*Prisoner A.* The priest knew about what had happened and what he said was that he couldn't do anything for me because he had to consider the greater good. If he was to go to the police and report that I'd been assaulted and in such a condition he would've had to retire.

Most prisoners felt that chaplains were not able to induce positive change in the SPS. They felt that the system was 'too far gone' for change. 'Chaplains can change some people but not the system', said one man.

Young offenders however, expressed a different view from adult offenders on the prophetic role of the chaplain

If chaplains think something is wrong, they will say but they don't have a strong influence.

The chaplain won't always be on your side but they would take your side if you were in the right.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The general view of chaplains, perceived by most adult prisoners was also linked to issues of trust and confidentiality. Prisoners expressed their mistrust of chaplains in various ways

You can't trust chaplains because you can tell them something and it might not be treated as confidential. They are told when they come into the jail that anything they are told by prisoners the governor may ask them about and they are duty bound to tell him and then the chaplain's out the door. If we brought up anything with regard to a security risk, then they would expect a chaplain to go and tell them. You could not for instance go and tell a chaplain about your anger in confidence because he would go and tell the governor.

The confidentiality aspect is a very fine line. If a prisoner takes a chaplain into his confidence and it is then reported in the papers - it means we can't tell them anything. What happens for instance when you go into the confessional and something is said and the next thing it is reported?

The confidential aspect is very hard to build up with a chaplain because you get confused and do not know if he is an establishment figure or a man of the cloth. Many come across as establishment figures.

Young offenders' attitudes to trust and confidentiality were different

I would rather go to a chaplain than a screw. If you tell a screw about a problem, he would laugh, the chaplain would treat you with more confidentiality.

They respect confidences and are different from the screws in that they can be trusted and they won't take it any further as long as it doesn't affect security.

## **Governors**

Only one governor was sympathetic to chaplains practising a prophetic model, believing that chaplains should not always accept the status quo within a prison establishment or in the prison system as a whole



Do you accept the status quo or not? I'm not sure how many chaplains would be comfortable with this model but I would encourage them to challenge what goes on in the prison.

Another governor was not as comfortable with the idea of chaplains practising this model. He felt that if chaplains practised the prophetic model, this could cause problems

They have a responsibility to the prison in relation to the maintenance of good order, their safety and the safety of others who come into the prison. They could over-identify with prisoners and not be at all times fully conscious of where boundaries are being crossed and where they need to be able to say to a prisoner 'I'm sorry but what you are now asking me to do, or be involved in, would conflict with basic good order and security'.

A senior manager said that

Chaplains should not be involved in this model. There is a grievance procedure for prisoner's complaints.

### **Church representatives**

Representatives of the churches who were interviewed, whilst acknowledging that a pastoral role was essential, felt that chaplains should be attempting to combine a pastoral role with a prophetic role. All of them regarded the prophetic model of ministry as essential in the prison setting

This is a role they should not forget about, yet I would not want to see it working to the neglect of the pastoral model.

Model D is a very natural development from the pastoral role.

The insights of a chaplain should be regarded as being very valuable for those in authority. I would expect my chaplains to practise Model D.

It is important for chaplains to reflect on what is going on in a prison. They should be able to highlight issues e.g., conditions/overcrowding, in a sensitive way. It is impossible for people on the outside to be aware of this and on the inside too. What goes on inside prisons is a problem for the whole church. I would like chaplains to be able to tell the church what is going on, to dispel the myths surrounding imprisonment.

## **The JPCB**

Members of the JPCB who were interviewed also spoke positively about the possibility of chaplains practising this model

It would be nice to think that chaplains were in a position to carry out this model.

Another remarked

Chaplains should be involved in advocacy for prisoners. I would expect a chaplain to speak out about prisoner's rights and say 'this is not right'. He might not get anywhere but he should be saying something, not just saying 'this is now the system works' and just being sympathetic. As long as the chaplain is not always knocking on the governor's door complaining - you have to have a certain amount of credibility in a place before management will listen to you - use your power and don't abuse it.

This view was reiterated by another member

Chaplains can go in with a sense of controlled outrage - an inner attitude - you cannot go around articulating it too much of the time. If you are questioning what is going on then you are making a useful contribution.

## **INVOLVEMENT**

The majority of chaplains have minimal involvement in the life of penal institutions. They tend to maintain a low profile in prison and most think they have little influence with management. Some chaplains thought this was

because they did not have enough knowledge of and regular involvement in prison routine and life and so would have little to offer the prison establishments in which they worked.

All governors who were interviewed thought that chaplains should be more involved in groups and/or committees within the prison and that they should have an input into policy within penal establishments but they did express some reservations. Constraints of time and a lack of professionalism and interest amongst some chaplains might mitigate against such involvement they said.

One GIC commented

There are a lot of chaplains happy to come in and do their job and leave it at that. I don't know how much interest they have in the policy initiatives in prison. I would like to think that anyone coming into prison would like to know what the vision of the establishment is.

Other Governors and senior managers commented similarly

The chaplains form a very important part of the regime side of the prison service and the regimes are a core functional activity. I see the chaplain as playing a very important part as a member of that broad regime activities team which also comprises education, social work, psychology, psychiatry.

I might be afraid if I involved them in management. I would like to have a chaplain at these meetings but it is not possible unless you have an ideal world. Not all chaplains are interested either.

Chaplains have an important part to play in an establishment but it depends on how they are plugged in and how they are seen as part of the team - alongside social work, education etc. It is important that they contribute to our philosophy and that they are part of that and that they are not left behind or segregated. There is a two-way relationship in that we need to provide the facilities for chaplains to perform their duties and they also need to integrate with the rest of the team in an establishment and fit

into that. They cannot be left as a satellite. We need generally to do more work in that line with a few service providers, not just chaplains.

## **Prisoners**

Some prisoners seemed confused as to how involved chaplains should be within establishments. They wanted chaplains to be more involved if this helped and supported them. However, they did not want to see them involved in disciplinary matters, e.g., as a member of a grievance panel, unless the chaplain was an advocate for them and was able to assist them in putting forward their case.

Prisoners were then asked if chaplains should have an input into management/policy meetings and the following quotation summarises the prevailing viewpoint

Only if you felt that the chaplain was on your side in a fair sense, if he was on a management committee making decisions about things that happen in here so that he was a balance to other governors and management. He cannot influence things if he's not on anything.

Others felt that it could be difficult for the chaplain to take a more active role in the prison because 'you can't be on both sides'.

## **Church representatives**

All church representatives who were interviewed felt that chaplains should be more involved in establishments.

One said

Chaplains should be involved in committees and, in the SPS, they represent the people at the cutting edge. I know there is no such thing as a prisoners trades union but they should be representing them.

## **CURRENT SCOTTISH PENAL POLICY**

Responses from a significant number of chaplains revealed that they either had no knowledge or at best scant knowledge and that many were indifferent to the main aspects of penal policy.

The JPCB however, has inserted into its draft Strategic Plan for 1996/7 proposals to 'participate in the debate on penal affairs' and, to 'set up a penal affairs committee within one year'.(SPS 1996b para. 7.8)

When asked to elucidate further on these proposed objectives, one Board member commented that the Board's primary motive was to influence penal policy in relation to the proposed building of a private prison. He explained

We want to influence decisions about a private prison. We saw this as an opportunity - to take the lead in ensuring that when the private prison came on stream, there had to be chaplaincy representation through the JPCB and the three main churches. We did not want a private prison to be directly employing chaplains on their own. We would not want to see a situation where a religious organisation or smaller denominations saw this as an opportunity for evangelism and conversion in the narrow sense.

He did not, however, voice any concern on behalf of the JPCB about the ethics of building and running private prisons for profit. When asked further about the Board's intention to set up a penal affairs committee, a member commented

This is a thing that we have never really got off the ground. We did talk about arranging a public debate because when the media look for the churches' view on penal policy, they never approach the JPCB. If we had something down on paper perhaps, that would be something. In the policy

document, it has always been our intention to get involved because unless we do something or create something, we will never be taken seriously. But we have removed this objective from the final draft.

A further comment by a Board member highlighted their inertia in the area of establishing a penal affairs committee

We are just talking about it. I am not sure the Board is the best group of people to be doing it. We have not been put on the Board by the churches for the profundity of our theological insights. It may be that there is some other group or place where that could be done. Chaplains themselves might become aware of issues of concern and it may require theological thought.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Responses from chaplains revealed that communication with governors and line managers was generally very poor. The full-time chaplains also expressed the view that they had little or no input into policy-making in the SPS unless they were asked specifically to contribute to any discussions. It was clear however, that the full-time chaplains were also reticent to contribute to policy-making discussions in the SPS and that communication or the lack of it, was a two-way problem.

### **Governors**

Governors voiced their concerns about the lack of communication between themselves and chaplains expressing differing accounts on the reasons for this

Communication may depend on how much interest chaplains perceive the Governor to take in the chaplaincy and whether they are sympathetic to the chaplains. I do not know how chaplains relate to governors who are apathetic although I would hope that all governors would take an interest in the chaplaincy function. I would always spend time with the chaplains

on their first visit and, when they take up the post, I would always tell them to come and see me any time.

There is some genuine difference of outlook and understanding, it is easy to dress that up by saying 'nobody told me'. I would defy anyone to come into prison and give me a hard example of important policy that staff don't know about.

An SPS senior manager commented

It is a consistent cry from chaplains that when decisions are made which may affect them, they say 'we were never asked'. They should be a lot more involved in the team in an establishment than they generally are, they should be coming forward to the team with input. The channels of communication are there, so why do they not use them? Chaplains just do not communicate with each other or with the governors

### **The JPCB and church representatives**

There is also a problem of communication between the JPCB and the churches. One of the main tasks of the JPCB is to forge greater links with churches but it appears as if this task is being only partially fulfilled. They engage in little or no communication with church authorities and church leaders, keeping them abreast of developments in chaplaincy policy and penal policy.

One Roman Catholic bishop said

We have no formal communication with the JPCB except through Prisoners Week, otherwise we are in the dark. There is no two-way communication between churches and the JPCB.

Another bishop said that he had never been informed about changes in chaplaincy and SPS penal policy.



Church representatives also admitted that they were unable to make pronouncements on topical prison issues because they were not sufficiently well informed about penal affairs. They did admit this was partially their fault but also claimed that they had received no information from the JPCB and other appropriate sources on chaplaincy to keep them aware of penal issues

We are dependent on the full-time chaplains to inform us about these matters and they in turn have to be informed by local chaplains if there is a problem which they feel we should make a pronouncement about.

A member of the JPCB said

The Board and the churches were asked to contribute to the Kincaid Committee on Parole. I don't think that the present regime in the Scottish Office asks the churches for their opinion these days. Sometimes we say, 'have we been asked?' and we haven't. That's the way of the world these days isn't it?

## **THE CARRYING AND USE OF KEYS**

A majority of chaplains who were interviewed thought that carrying keys would not be viewed by prisoners in a symbolic way. They said that using a key gave them better access to individual prisoners and that it aided access and time management.

Young offenders who were interviewed viewed the carrying and use of keys by chaplains as being primarily to ease access for chaplains in the prison. However, adult offenders viewed the carrying and use of keys by chaplains in a markedly different way from their younger counterparts and from chaplains. Their comments included

They shouldn't be carrying keys

That big key is a judge in itself

That key chain, irrespective of who has it, identifies with the establishment. The chaplains don't need a key, the staff count you in and out.

How can a chaplain in a jail be neutral when he has a set of keys?

Where is the trust going to be? As far as I am concerned, I do not trust social workers, priests, anybody who has a set of keys, because they are run by the jail.

He's right enough. They're all basically run by the establishment because that's who has given them the keys.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the evidence in this chapter, it would appear that the current state of chaplaincy in the SPS is far from satisfactory.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons produced a thematic report on prison chaplaincy in 1987 in response to Inspectorate concerns about the lack of understanding of the role of chaplains which it had found amongst chaplains themselves, in the prison system and in the churches.(HMCIP 1987) Three out of the four principal recommendations of the Inspectorate report were implemented - a full review of contracted hours took place, a review of the full range of the tasks of the prison chaplain as contained in statute and local orders was carried out and was embodied in the Prison Rules 1994, and two full-time senior chaplains were appointed, one from the Church of Scotland and one from the Roman Catholic Church to monitor, appraise and advise the chaplaincy members of their particular denomination. The appointment of a professional head of chaplaincy was not accepted by the Secretary of State.

Ten years after the Report was published, many of the Chief Inspector's other recommendations already outlined in chapter three, have yet to be addressed.

There can be no doubt from the research findings reported in this chapter that there is still a degree of role confusion amongst chaplains, prisoners, governors, senior management and the churches. The system of recruitment is still problematic. There has been little or no attempt to prepare and train clergy for prison chaplaincy work, part-time ministry in its present form is not as satisfactory as it could be, there is still poor communication between chaplains themselves, between chaplains and prison management, and between chaplains and the JPCB and the churches. Chaplains still have little involvement in the life of prison establishments, links with presbyteries and church committees remain tenuous, terms and conditions for chaplains have still to be regularised by the JPCB and the SPS, and there has been no appointment of a professional head of chaplaincy. Chaplains still express feelings of isolation and feel undervalued.

There are a number of other areas of concern which were not discussed in the Inspectorate report but which have since become evident and it is to some of these that I now turn.

First there is a problem with the churches' inability to fully understand the nature of prison ministry and its apparent lack of interest and lack of support for chaplains in the field. It is very clear that, whereas church leaders may use positive theological language about prison ministry and whereas they may voice their support for prison chaplains, prison chaplaincy is *the* area of chaplaincy which seems to receive the least support and interest from church authorities and church congregations. Because prison chaplaincy is given such

a low priority, one can only conclude that the care of prisoners is also a low priority for the churches. It could be suggested that this neglect by the churches underlies many of the reasons why chaplaincy in prison is in its current state and why many chaplains feel isolated and undervalued in their work. Against this background, it is hardly surprising that chaplains may not be practising their ministry in prison as effectively as they could.

Another area of concern which has been highlighted is the contrast between the way in which chaplains perceive their ministry in prison and the way in which prisoners and governors perceive that ministry. A majority of chaplains described their ministry as pastoral although they did practise, to varying degrees, a combination of models of ministry. What became obvious was that prisoners and governors identified chaplains as practising a largely different kind of ministry. Only two prisoners could identify their experience of chaplains with the pastoral model and instead Model F was chosen by all other prisoners. This model describes the chaplain as having a normalising influence in the prison in terms of assisting prisoners to adapt themselves and conform to the penal establishment, ensuring social stability and explaining the ways of the institution to prisoners. There is of course, inherent in this model, a pastoral element, but it is a model of ministry where chaplains arguably perform what Pattison describes in his study of mental health chaplains as, 'a functional, conservative and facilitative role...oilers of the wheels, providers of care and solace for individuals and small groups'. (Pattison 1995:203) Concurring with Pattison's description, chaplains would appear to be seen as establishment figures by most prisoners, supporting the status quo and so tacitly and unreflectively helping to keep the present system going 'with little apparent regard for the important issues of injustice, inequality, power and social

structure?' (Ibid.:203) This description of ministry is borne out by other factors in this research.

Prisoners' very vocal views about chaplains' non-prophetic ministry could corroborate this description of ministry. Chaplains indicated in their responses that many of them practised the prophetic model very well or to some extent. Yet prisoners who were interviewed, both religious and non-religious prisoners, said that in their experience, chaplains did not practise a prophetic ministry but that they would have more respect for chaplains if they did. It may be the case that other prisoners in the system, who were not interviewed, may have had experience of chaplains acting in a prophetic way and it could also be that chaplains have acted prophetically but in a way not obviously apparent to prisoners. However, there was a general consensus amongst those prisoners who participated in the focus groups however, that in their opinion, chaplains would prefer not to get involved in prophetic action. Vivid descriptions of chaplains turning a blind eye to situations where blatant injustices have occurred were given by some prisoners and have been cited in this chapter.

Linked to the prophetic role of chaplains were the issues of trust and confidentiality. It would be fair to say that prisoners generally feel mistrustful of everyone in a prison system that is permeated with fear, suspicion and hostility, but that the degree of mistrust of chaplains was so great. It may be that many chaplains do uphold a high degree of confidentiality with prisoners even though prisoners may not realise this. However, what these and the previously cited views of prisoners reveal is that if chaplains are practising a prophetic ministry even to some extent, prisoners should be more aware of this. Why is it that if chaplains uphold a high degree of confidentiality in their dealings with prisoners, prisoners do not seem to be aware of this?

The carrying and use of keys is also another matter where there is a serious discrepancy of views between chaplains and prisoners and this is also related to chaplains being perceived as establishment figures. Apart from young offenders who expressed no concern about chaplains carrying keys, all adult offenders expressed the view that the use of a pass or cell key was a symbol of the system, a symbol of power over them, inhibiting the growth of trust between prisoners and chaplains and demonstrating the chaplains' affiliation with the system rather than with them. This perceived affiliation of chaplains with the system was further borne out by prisoners saying that they wanted chaplains to be more involved in the life of establishments and in policy and decision-making in establishments but with the proviso that chaplains ensured that prisoners' best interests were being served. They were clear that chaplains should not be involved in discipline issues within the prison unless they were acting as advocates for them. They felt that chaplains could not even begin to influence establishment policy if they had no input into decision-making but they were keen to emphasise that the chaplain should not be seen as siding with the establishment.

Governors wanted chaplains to become more involved in the life of establishments and in decision-making because they felt that chaplains had much to offer, but governors felt that many chaplains were not sufficiently interested in the life of establishments to become more involved and that they did not always seem to want to integrate into the management team. Governors were also keen for chaplains to become involved in the management team of establishments because they wanted chaplains to do what was stated in the chaplaincy Strategic Plan for 1996/7, namely to give 'support for the SPS and its objectives'.

Involvement in the life of prison establishments is also connected with how much prisoners see chaplains working in prison establishments. A bishop said in his interview that he thought chaplains should be offering a 'ministry of presence' in prisons but to prisoners, chaplains do not seem to be physically seen around establishments enough. The part-time nature of prison ministry may be one cause of this, but what seems to arise is that chaplains are not seen by prisoners to be present enough in the grime and overcrowdedness and sadness of their imprisoned lives, where forces can crush weak prisoners and where people can suffer further injustice and a loss of hope.

One can conclude therefore that prisoners want to see chaplains having more of a physical presence in establishments, and they seem to want them to be more involved in the life of prison establishments and in decision-making, provided they are acting in their interests. Governors and senior managers would also like to see chaplains become more involved in prisons but there is a perception that chaplains are not sufficiently interested in becoming more involved and of course, governors view chaplains' involvement differently from prisoners.

The interviews also revealed that there is a serious language problem between chaplains and prisoners, between chaplains and governors, between chaplains and the JPCB, and between the JPCB and governors and senior management. It appears as though there is little or no convergence of understanding between the parties in terms of communication. This has obviously led to misunderstanding, barriers, confusion and differing perceptions of each other.

It seems as if chaplains are domestic chaplains to prisoners who become or are religious, instead of demonstrating that they are there for the spiritual welfare



of all prisoners, believers or not. This wider view of ministry is obviously accompanied by a different understanding of spirituality and religiosity than a purely church-based religiosity. There may be, amongst many chaplains, too much emphasis on religious individualism without sufficient reference to the fact that, as Grace Davie argues, the patterns of religious life are changing and 'more and more people within British society want to believe but do not want to involve themselves in religious practice'. (Davie 1994:107) Chaplains seem to be currently ministering to an increasingly religious minority in prisons and excluding many prisoners from their attention and care who may wish to develop their spiritual life or who may simply wish to spend some of their time with a chaplain but who do not wish to adhere to either a specific religious denomination or faith.

All this leads to the view that although the current ministry of chaplains may for a minority of prisoners, be of infinite benefit, there are literally hundreds of prisoners in the Scottish penal system whose lives are never touched by the presence of chaplains and many chaplains whose lives are never touched by the presence of many prisoners. Chaplains seem to be functionaries within the SPS, practising a ministry which is largely traditional and conservative, a ministry which offers care, support and love but in a somewhat narrowly defined way with little if any reference to current penal policy, or to the structures of the SPS and its system of power over those who are imprisoned.

The implications of the findings reported in this chapter for the future practice of chaplains in the Scottish prison system are addressed in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **TOWARDS A DYNAMIC AND CHALLENGING PRISON MINISTRY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

It is evident from the empirical research described in chapters four and five that there are different understandings and a degree of confusion amongst prisoners, governors, senior management and church representatives about the role and ministry which prison chaplains practise. Governors and prisoners believe that their role is a normalising one, helping prisoners come to terms with their imprisonment and contributing to social stability in the prison. Chaplains are also seen as offering spiritual guidance to religious prisoners, engaging in pastoral work and conducting religious services. Church representatives expect chaplains to fulfil a pastoral role which includes a rehabilitative element and chaplains regard their ministry as primarily pastoral.

In this chapter, I focus on the current role and ministry of chaplains and put forward some proposals for the future. To that end, I make reference to comparative literature on the role and function of hospital chaplains which gives support to the proposals I wish to make. I would stress however, that any proposals I offer are dependent on prison chaplaincy in the SPS in its present form being thoroughly reviewed and the problem areas identified in the thesis acknowledged, assessed and rectified. These areas include appropriate selection and recruitment, participation in ongoing training which would include familiarisation with penal policy and practice, the problematic nature of part-time employment which inhibits the development of an effective ministry

of presence, a more active interest and greater support by the churches for prison ministry and the appointment of a head of chaplaincy. Other areas of concern are highlighted in the thesis but it is not my intention to provide solutions to all of these: that is for others to do if the findings of the research are accepted.

## **THE CHAPLAIN AS A CONSERVATIVE AND ESTABLISHMENT FIGURE**

It is clear from the findings reported in chapters four and five that, although most chaplains indicated that they practised and/or aspired to a pastoral model of ministry, it is an inherently conservative model. They are regarded by prisoners as establishment figures. This is borne out by the attitudinal consistency of prisoners with regard to the level of trust they have in chaplains, their questioning of chaplains' abilities to keep confidential information and their perceptions of chaplains 'siding' with the prison authorities. Adult prisoners felt that carrying cell/pass keys further reflected the chaplains' allegiance to the system and most prisoners felt that chaplains were not seen around prisons enough or sufficiently involved in their lives.

Although the majority of chaplains who responded to the postal survey indicated that they carried out a ministry to the whole institution and that they spend time with prisoners who do not consider themselves religious, the research reveals that the majority of their time seems to be spent with religious prisoners, with prisoners who express an interest in religion and/or members of churches who are serving a prison sentence. Prisoners who participated in the research also felt this to be the case. Organisationally, only the three main religious denominations in Scotland are represented in prison but I would

contend that this 'closed shop attitude', to quote one senior SPS manager, to the provision of chaplaincy is limiting. Some chaplains who were interviewed highlighted issues of denominational power and rivalry

We have a Church of Scotland sub-committee for chaplains, to protect the interests of Church of Scotland chaplains, or the Catholics will take over

The setting up of the JPCB has provided a power base for the Church of Scotland

The Roman Catholic chaplain won't work with us - he thinks he knows best.

The Catholics are trying to get more hours from us (*the Church of Scotland*) so that they can rule the roost

In contrast to the importance which some chaplains place on denominational affiliation, focus groups revealed that prisoners in general express little interest in the denominational affiliation of chaplains, except among the minority of prisoners who request a sacrament from a particular church. In light of this, I would argue that denominational affiliation should have less relevance in the institutional setting of the prison but that a minister and/or priest should be available for sacramental ministry as required. Michael Wilson, a doctor and Anglican priest found evidence of denominational segregation in his research on the work of hospital chaplains and felt that such segregation and division was inappropriate in an institutional setting. (Wilson 1971:90; see also Faber 1971:76) He argues that such a situation encourages the unnecessary division of chaplaincy work and demonstrates the fragmentation of the whole church to the institution as a whole. He comments that the segregation of denominations is

in conflict between the Old Testament idea of the separateness of the priest, wholly concerned for believers: contrasted with Christ's pattern of

work both with his Jewish disciples and Samaritan, Syro-Phoenician and Roman. (op. cit.:90)

Chaplains who are 'post-denominational' therefore have the opportunity to break out of what is sometimes a rather narrow church-based organised religiosity and conservatism and its concomitant, denominational segregation and fragmentation, and practise a much more dynamic, inclusive kind of ministry which offers an holistic pastoral care to all, similar to that described by Clinebell

In our culture where privatized salvation-seeking...is epidemic, it is well to remember that the health of our relationship with God is always interrelated with the health of all other facets of our lives - physical, psychological, interpersonal, ecological, and institutional...Our individual spiritual wholeness is deeply influenced by the quality of the institutional structures of our society...Living in ways that enhance the wholeness of the so-called non-spiritual dimensions of our lives, helps to enrich the quality of our spiritual lives. The non-spiritual turns out to be inextricably intertwined with the spiritual. The creative Spirit moves in all dimensions of our existence. (Clinebell 1984:114f.)

This type of approach has further implications for the practice of ministry in prison.

## **THE NATURE OF THE POWERS**

Although most chaplains indicated in their responses to the postal survey and in interviews that there is a prophetic element to their pastoral ministry, this is not really apparent to prisoners or to management. One can only conclude therefore that their ministry seems to be largely lacking an active prophetic element. The emphasis of chaplains' ministry appears to be on changing individuals rather than working towards a positive change of the system for the benefit of everyone. As one chaplain said, 'they are too busy with individuals

to fight the system'. Another chaplain who had worked in an establishment where prisoners on remand were locked up for twenty-three hours a day said 'it doesn't matter what the system is...I could do nothing about it - the system is as it is'. It could therefore be suggested that, as Quinley (1974) found in his research into the social activism of clergy, the predominant component of the chaplains' practice of ministry is

salvation-oriented otherworldliness...concerned in their religious duties more with life after death than with social conditions on earth. Their primary function as pastors is to bring the Word of God to the sinful, which will allow the latter to receive forgiveness and obtain salvation in the afterlife. The clergyman's role in secular affairs is thus an indirect one...(Quinley 1974:56)

How can chaplains be pastorally empathetic, sensitive to the situation and needs of prisoners and offer holistic pastoral care without addressing themselves to the structures and decisions of power that can create injustice, destructiveness and a loss of hope for people in prison? It is my argument that this is not possible and it is therefore essential that chaplains include a prophetic dimension to their pastoral ministry. Such a model of ministry obviously entails a ministry which is credible to prisoners and tailored to their needs. It has to be a ministry in which chaplains project their image effectively, communicating *why* they work in prisons and *what* they can offer to prisoners. This would reduce many of the misunderstandings which seem to occur and would alleviate to some extent the problem of differing perceptions of chaplains by prisoners. It also means offering a ministry to the powerful and to the community, in particular the church community. Before I offer some proposals for achieving this in practical terms, I want to look briefly at the work of Walter Wink and Duncan Forrester, in particular at their understanding of the nature of the New Testament concept of the powers and how this might

provide a theoretical basis for the practice of a prophetic ministry to the penal system where the use of power over others is at its most evident and most problematic. I also want to consider two biblical images which could be relevant to the practice of a prophetic ministry in prison - that of 'servant' and 'son'. (Wilson 1971)

Jesus was a man of prophetic action and deeply spiritual. He discerned that we live under a system of domination that exercises power over us. He was able to discern the powers, exposing their domination over people. According to Wink (1992:110), 'Jesus not only repudiated the autocratic values of power and wealth, but the institutions and systems that authorised and supported these values'. He demonstrated his concern for the oppressed and marginalised people in the world, he rejected ranking, domination hierarchies, the accumulation of excess wealth, class inequality, the exploitation of the many by the few. (Ibid., p. 113f.) He refused to accept the status quo in the society in which he lived and he confronted the values of the powers at every opportunity. In line with the example of Jesus then, Wink argues that the expression 'the Powers'

should ...be used generically for all manifestations of power...the Powers are simultaneously the outer and inner aspects of one and the same indivisible concretion of power. (Wink 1984:107)

Wink believes that the powers are good, but that they are also fallen and must be redeemed. He writes

We cannot affirm governments or institutions or businesses to be good unless at the same time we recognise that they are fallen. We cannot face their malignant intractability and oppressiveness unless we remember that they are simultaneously a part of God's good creation. And reflection on their creation and fall will appear only to legitimate these Powers and



blast hope for change unless we assert at the same time that these Powers can and must be redeemed. (Wink 1992:10)

Extrapolating Wink's argument to the penal system, it could be argued that we do need places where some people can be held because of their level of dangerousness either to individuals or communities and so in that sense, prisons could be regarded as necessary if their regimes and conditions are humane and effective. At the present time however, they are largely places of containment, where people are very often warehoused in rather poor conditions. The penal system is one, which despite its positive aspects is, by its very nature, not as healthy or humane as it could be. It is a system in which ever greater numbers of people are imprisoned in overcrowded prisons; it is a system where prison staff have to spend their time maintaining security and order rather than pursuing the more constructive aspects of their jobs. It is a system where there is little positive benefit to be gained from imprisonment for those who are imprisoned and who go on to commit more crime on release. Prisons can thus be regarded as fallen. However, they can be redeemed in that positive change and transformation is possible. Wink does say however, that although in his view, God created the powers, it does not follow that God endorses any particular power (Ibid.:67). In relation to the penal system, his argument could mean that God upholds the system, but condemns the system insofar as it is destructive of full human actualisation and presses for its transformation into a more humane order. (op. cit.:67) Wink argues that the powers as named in the New Testament are 'the divine vocations...the impersonal spiritual realities at the center of institutional life'. (Ibid.:9) and that 'only by confronting the spirituality of an institution and its concretions can the total entity be transformed, and that requires a kind of spiritual discernment and praxis'. (Ibid.:10) The powers therefore cannot be reduced to individuals only but are also 'the interiority of earthly institutions and structures or systems...These

Powers...are the inner and outer manifestations of political, economic, religious and cultural institutions'. (Ibid.:78) This is an important point to emphasise.

Wink explains

before us we have the chairperson of a political committee. Which is really the Power here - the person, or the role? Not the person - she can be replaced with another, and the job will go on being done. Not the role either - for some use it to great benefit and others irresponsibly. Is it then the person-in-the-role? But then what authorizes her to act? Is it then the authority invested in her by the constituting charter of the group? But what gives the charter its binding character? Where is power finally to be located, unless we see it as the total interaction of all these aspects, visible and invisible? And how is power to be brought to heel, unless it is addressed on its own terrain - unless...we address not only the physical manifestations of the group but also its 'spirit'...? This is certainly the way the 'one like the son of man' goes about attempting to reform the churches in Revelation 1:3. [*Happy is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and happy those who listen if they take to heart what is here written; for the time of fulfilment is near*'. Revised English Bible] And to revert to the fundamental question that Eph. 3:10 placed before us [*that now, through the church, the wisdom of God in its infinite variety might be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realm*'].]...is it not precisely the addressing of this inner reality of power which the author of Eph. 3:10 directs the church to do? (Wink 1984:108)

In relation to individuals, Forrester (1982) concurs with Wink's analysis that individuals

are not only parts of a system, but a system which expresses a spirituality which can become idolatrous. It has to be judged not solely or even mainly, in terms of the personal moral integrity of the 'gentlemen' who run it, but in terms of the functions, effects, and pretensions of the system. (Forrester 1982:74)

This view is substantiated in a non-religious way by an interesting research experiment undertaken by Philip Zimbardo who

set up a make-believe gaol, allocating student volunteers to the roles of guards and prisoners...His aim was to see how far playing these different roles led to changes in attitude and behaviour. The results shocked the

investigators, even though they were to some degree expecting them. Those who played the guards quickly assumed an authoritarian manner, displaying real hostility towards the 'prisoners'. They started to order the 'prisoners' around, verbally abuse and bully them. The others, by contrast, showed a mixture of apathy and rebelliousness often noted among inmates in real prison situations. These effects were so marked, and the level of tension so high, that the experiment had to be called off at an early stage. The researcher concluded that behaviour in prisons is more influenced by the nature of the prison situation than by the individual characteristics of those involved. (Giddens 1993:694f.)

Forrester continues his argument that

the powerful generally see their responsibilities in terms of accepting and running the system. For most...acceptance of the system involves neither having too grandiose expectations of what it might deliver, nor fearing it as a demonic force...but too frequently they also are ignorant of how people affected by their decisions live...And, like the rest of us, they are sinners, subject to the corrupting influence of power. Good intentions and idealism, combined with hard work, are not enough. The powerful need to be helped...to resist the specific temptations that go with their responsibilities...The powerful need pastors who appreciate the complexity of the problems facing them, but nevertheless challenge and enlarge their sense of responsibility...Ministry to the powerful involves special dangers: the danger of being sucked into collusion in particular, so that the pastor can never question or confront. (Forrester 1982:68f.)

Although colluding with the system is easy and even attractive to some chaplains, it denies the practice of a proper pastoral care. Forester argues

It is...perfectly proper and desirable that there should be chaplains to the powerful, pastors who have the necessary empathy, insight, and experience to minister to those who carry great responsibilities. A pastor's task, however, is never to collude in the games people play or allow people to remain in a comforting but unreal world of fantasy. A proper pastoral care involves constant, sometimes painful, probing below the surface to find and unmask what hidden motivations lurk beneath - interests, pathologies, and fears which can distort judgement and action at their spring. Such is true pastoral support, the authentic ministry to the powerful. (Ibid.:68)

My research seems to indicate that, for various reasons, some chaplains would rather collude with the system, perhaps unwittingly, rather than confront it. Michael Wilson argues that from his experience of hospital chaplains who work in the institutional setting of the hospital, there are chaplains who do the same. They feel comfortable allaying themselves with the role of servant and whereas the role of servant is always appropriate in ministry, Wilson argues that this role is not enough because a servant adopts a non-critical stance in his/her work. He suggests that the role of 'son' is more prophetic. Although Wilson does not expand a great deal on the role of the 'son', it is clear that he is referring to the example of Jesus who whilst adopting a servant role, was also an egalitarian prophet who was specially concerned with the people who were marginalised and socially excluded. He spoke out against injustice, unfairness, inequality, hatred and called to account the powerful people and institutions of his day. Wilson argues that in adopting a servant role to the detriment of the son role hospital chaplains

accept the hospital as it is and perpetuate injustice...servants do not criticise or question the corporate activities of the institution in which they serve...It is for lack of this sense of what sonship means that Christians see their task mostly in terms of loving service to patients;...the notion of loving service needs to regain its content of partnership and critical responsibility...It is certain Jesus was not crucified for his loving service to people...the Church, as presented by hospital chaplains is too often seduced into a tranquillising role which also militates against learning and change...Christians need to see their role as one of 'critical responsibility', which is a position of complete involvement with men and women in the hospital, taking experience seriously...The primary task of the church is in this area of the search for truth, then handing on the truth, the re-interpretation and renewal of truth, and the communication of truth, for its bearing upon what it means to be human in a situation of wellness or illness, and for the health of society. (Wilson 1971:39)

In the prison setting it seems as if many chaplains may adopt the role of servant also and therefore not regard their role as being one that also embodies critical

responsibility. Such a role requires openness, risk and commitment to personal learning about the practice of ministry but this is not easy to achieve when chaplains feel isolated and unsupported and when a limited part-time ministry is all that is presently possible. Collusion with the system can also mean that chaplains can become less sensitive to the realities of the prison experience. One chaplain who was interviewed said

It is easy to turn away from a problem, regarding it as a nuisance. Working in a big institution, it's very easy to let things slide, especially if men have a reputation for being nuisances and not very nice characters. It's easy to ignore them and their problems.

The issue of the de-sensitisation of chaplains working in the penal setting which is inherent in the act of collusion is a crucial one in that being prophetic becomes less of a possibility if chaplains become immune to the injustices and problems which prisoners experience.

Many chaplains who were interviewed understood a prophetic ministry as being confrontational and fighting against the system. Others felt they lacked the confidence to speak out and that courage was needed to confront governors and/or senior management about an injustice or a decision which they felt detrimentally affected a prisoner's life. Yet being prophetic is not only about being confrontational but rather about affirming and encouraging best policy and practice and criticising that which is negative and diminishing. But it does also mean that chaplains must be prepared to speak out

whatever the cost, when constrained to do so by the gospel...to announce the Kingdom, to proclaim the gospel, to affirm the justice of God, not to defend its own institutional interests. (Forrester 1982:54)



Being confrontational means in reality that when a chaplain sees a prisoner with his legs and hands broken by prison staff, he confronts this rather than, as one prisoner said, doing or saying nothing because he had to 'consider the greater good'. The greater good surely is to side with justice rather than with the power that abused this prisoner and the chaplain should be willing, if necessary, to pay the price for speaking out - reprimand, dismissal or the loss of career advancement - although there may be no price to pay if s/he is listened to.

Wilson in his discussion about the prophetic role of hospital chaplains illustrates the same point. He tells the story of a hospital which was visited by the Secretary of State for Social Services. The Minister was

horrified at the overcrowded conditions and lack of facilities. Within a few weeks of his visit, a new social centre and a new industrial workshop were completed and opened. Why does it need a visit from a Secretary of State to expose and begin to remedy inhuman conditions? Are Christians content to continue a ministry to individuals within an unjust situation without protest?

So it is that in the penal system chaplains have to discern those aspects of the system which oppress and destroy people and the forces which create injustice and then find ways to relate to the Powers so that as Forrester argues one can, 'monitor what one is doing in a Christian way...hold one's responsibilities in the system as responsibilities before God, and to live from God's grace and forgiveness'. (Forrester 1982:75) Chaplains have a responsibility to be agents of learning and change in the penal system, to embody 'critical responsibility', to search for truth and to speak the truth in love to those who will hear it.

If the foregoing arguments about the nature of the Powers and the biblical image of the son are accepted as providing a theoretical basis for a prophetic

ministry, what then does this mean in practical terms for the ministry of chaplains in the penal setting?

## **PRACTICAL PROPOSALS**

### **Team-working**

The practice of a prophetic ministry by its very nature implies that in order to discern the powers and engage with management and policy makers, chaplains have to regard themselves as members of a team, not only with their chaplaincy colleagues in the establishment in which they work but also with others who work in the establishment. They cannot continue to regard themselves as 'outsiders', '*(the chaplains)*' role is creative or destructive for the life of the institution as a whole - it cannot be just a ministry to individuals'. (Wilson 1971:110) Faber argues too in his work on hospital chaplaincy that

the place of the minister in the hospital will only be worthwhile if we recognise as fundamental that in hospital one is dealing with a team, i.e., a group of people each with his own task and therefore with his own proper role, yet never allowed to forget that, for the sake of the patient, they must learn to play as a team. Hence it would be quite wrong to regard the minister as a figure on his own, one who has a task for which he is responsible only to himself and in which he must be allowed to go more or less his own way regardless of others...If we are to guard against turning the hospital into a factory in which only efficiency and production-figures are of importance, then we must grasp firmly that only a team of people, each an expert with his or her own task to do, yet able as people together to carry responsibility, can make a hospital into a community of human beings...the minister is therefore not an isolated person, who can be left to go his own way, but a man who in the midst of all the many ways in which the sick are cared for has his own way of caring, one which fits in with all the others...(Faber Ibid.:68-70)



Concurring with Faber's argument a chaplain cannot contribute to positive change in the penal system either without being involved along with others in the life of the institution in which s/he works. This involvement will naturally mean that the chaplain works in constant tension because he/she has to be part of a team yet retain an independence of spirit and thought which will be made manifest in his/her practice. Yet it is this very independence of spirit and of thought, which is absolutely intrinsic to the practise of prison ministry, coupled with a desire to work with others to achieve the best possible environment for those who are incarcerated and for those who work in such an environment which can make the chaplain a valued and positive member of the prison team.

### **Earning Respect**

If chaplains are to be heard however, they have to earn respect from their colleagues. Respect can come from authority - the authority of office and the authority of the person. A prison chaplain receives the authority of the church which accepts his/her call to the Christian ministry (Perry 1977:77) and s/he has an authority through 'the authenticity of the person he is...and his authenticity will determine to a large extent the degree to which his authority is accepted by the people to whom he ministers'. (Ibid.:77) The degree to which chaplains nurture and express authority will determine the degree of respect they receive from prisoners, staff, management and policy makers. This respect coupled with proper training and a full knowledge of penal policy and its implementation could go some way to ensuring that chaplains are heard, speaking the truth in love to those in power whose policies affect those who are imprisoned. In practical terms this means that chaplains need to involve themselves more in the life of institutions, particularly in the decision-making

processes, offering constructive critique and proposals and not waiting to be asked by those in authority to make a contribution.

### **Strong pastoral relationships**

The pastoral care which chaplains offer to those in power also has to be continuous and effective, for it is often through strong pastoral relationships that a receptivity to a prophetic ministry is possible. Douglas Perry, a former chaplain in the Canadian Correctional Service illustrates this point well. He had been working as a chaplain in a prison for some time and he had been asked to make a speech to a local organisation about his work in prison. During his speech, he 'assumed the prophetic role and was quite critical of the criminal justice system and, in particular, the correctional system'. (Perry 1973:70)

Perry writes

I described the correctional system as one that squanders resources in both human and economic terms. I stated that correctional institutions are being overused and there are many people in prison who should not be there...I stressed that there are more effective ways to deal with these people than banishing them from our communities. The meeting was attended by a member of the press and generated enough interest to be taken up by a national wire service. I was not too surprised to find that the strongest reaction to my presentation came...from the staff at the institution where I was the chaplain...One response...came from a senior staff person with whom I had a good relationship...he had experienced the pastoral aspect of my ministry on different occasions...On this particular morning...he lashed out at me in anger as soon as he saw me...He accused me of being uninformed, of not knowing what I was talking about, of being crazy to suggest that criminals should not go to prison. I listened to his feelings and...explain[ed] the views that I had expressed, but at that point his feelings were so intense that he was not able to hear what I was saying...We parted company that day on speaking terms, but the issue between us was...not resolved...The next day, I received a message that this man would like to see me...He invited me into his office...and with tears in his eyes he proceeded to apologize to me for his response on the previous day. He openly shared with me how difficult it was for him to

adjust to the changes that gradually had been taking place in the correctional system. He went on to say that he could understand the position I was taking and that he respected me and what I was trying to accomplish. As a result of that encounter our relationship deepened. (Ibid.:71f.)

Perry's experience is substantiated by a chaplain who was interviewed for the purposes of this research and who practised a prophetic model of ministry to some extent but also aspired to practise this model more fully. She commented

It has taken me over three years to get inner confidence so that I can speak out. I have built up a relationship with staff so that I can say something without them taking offence. In the early days they were defensive because I was new. I say things in a different way now and by and large they respond to me. I know now that I have a voice and a right to speak out, doing it on behalf of a sense of justice for prisoners. I have gained the trust of governors and staff by working to get to the truth in the system. They are in positions of great responsibility and when I speak to them, I am not threatening them.

It seems clear however, that given the poor communication which currently exists between most chaplains and governors and between the JPCB, the churches and senior management, it is difficult to imagine to what extent chaplains are offering a pastoral and prophetic ministry to the powerful whose decisions ultimately affect the powerless who are incarcerated. The effectiveness of communication of course must also ensure that chaplains communicate to prisoners through word and action that their special concern is for them and their welfare at all times and that this comes, not only from their personal involvement with them but from their involvement in and critique of the institutions in which prisoners are held.

## **Prophets to the community**

The practice of a prophetic ministry also extends beyond the prison walls to the church and the community on the outside. This research has shown that the churches do not seem to share the same interest in prisoners and the penal system as many chaplains do and that most chaplains feel they are working in isolation from their churches and in some cases from their church congregations, from whom they should be receiving support and encouragement. Of course the church could rest content, providing part-time chaplains for as little as four hours each week in some prisons so that some of the pieces can be picked up when some men and women in prison disintegrate mentally and physically through the experience of being incarcerated. The churches can attempt through the work of chaplains, to pick up some of the pieces when imprisonment destroys families and lives. The churches can, through their chaplains organise bible classes, 'Alpha' courses, other kinds of religious education for a minority of prisoners. Yet can the churches continue to work like this with little or no continuing reference to the wider issues surrounding imprisonment and its effects on society?

In hospitals where sick and dying people arouse instinctive compassion, concern and love in people, the church through its chaplains has a respected position and in larger hospitals, chaplains are often regarded as part of hospital teams. The work of hospital chaplains however, has not always been adequately supported by the church. It is only since 1993 that the churches, after much urging from hospital chaplains have become more involved in supporting the work of their hospital chaplains and have become more informed about NHS policy and practice and its effects on patients, staff and the community. This stronger involvement by the churches was precipitated by hospital chaplains in Britain joining together to form the College of Health Care

Chaplains (CHCC). The College is an ecumenical body of people representing different denominations and faiths, whose remit is to monitor and evaluate not only the practice of hospital chaplains but also NHS policy and practice. The CHCC takes its prophetic role seriously. In response to the concern of its members, it set up a working group to evaluate and report on current trends in the NHS and issued the following statement

The CHCC, committed to the prophetic vision of a society which cares for the sick, frail, poor and dying and having listened to the evidence of its members, expresses its deep concern at some current trends in the NHS. (College of Health Care Chaplains 1993)

The Report of the Working Group (1994) emphasises the importance of the prophetic element inherent in the pastoral care of hospital chaplains and acknowledges the unique place chaplains have in the hospital which informs their critical responsibility

because of their ability to visit every part of a hospital and meet and talk to...patients, relatives and staff, come into contact with all professions, trades and occupations at work or be familiar with issues of concern throughout the hospital...it follows that chaplains may be expected to have a distinctive overview and a singular insight into the institution (College of Health Care Chaplains Working Group Report 1994 para. 2.1)

The Report discusses reforms in the NHS, acknowledges the improvements made to existing services and offers a detailed discussion on issues of justice. It offers critical analysis of the values and management of the NHS, and the care and future of the elderly, chronic sick and dependent. It offers comment on hospital trusts and the communities they serve and it gives its response to the Government policy of 'care in the community'. The Report affirms positive changes in the NHS but also criticises the NHS where it considers policy and practice to be negative and life-diminishing. This proactive role of hospital

chaplains has seen the establishment in Scotland of the Scottish Churches Committee on Health Care Chaplaincy and the publication of 'Health Care Chaplaincy Standards', a document jointly produced by the CHCC, the Free Church Hospital Chaplaincy Board, the Hospital Chaplaincies Council and Roman Catholic Hospital Chaplaincies. (Report of Committee on Chaplaincies 1994 para. 2.1) This example of prophetic ministry in action has led to greater involvement by chaplains in consultative roles with local NHS Trusts and in team-working in hospitals. There has also been a gradual involvement by the churches in supporting the work of hospital chaplains. Churches may now become more informed about NHS policy and find positive ways of contributing to the ongoing debate about health policy and practice.

This example of proactive chaplaincy may also be helpful given the current situation in which prison chaplains find themselves. It could be argued that prison chaplains have to speak out to the church community and its leaders even though it is likely that many in that community will not, at first, share their views or concern. In speaking out to the churches, it is to be hoped that they in turn and in time, will listen and speak out to others about the penal system and its reform. There is, in the penal system, an underlying set of theological issues which need to be reflected upon and addressed by churches - the essential dignity of men and women, shame and guilt, hopelessness and rejection, justice and mercy, sin and responsibility, forgiveness and reconciliation and as Wink points out

what the church can do best...though it does so all too seldom, is to delegitimize an unjust system and...create a spiritual counterclimate.  
(Wink 1992:165)

The prophetic influence of chaplains on the church means that the pressure and influence of the church, the eternal truths and values of God's kingdom could be brought to bear on the current system of imprisonment in Scotland. Faithfulness to Jesus Christ involves the church in not just being content to employ chaplains to work in prisons but giving them little leadership, support, encouragement, training and time to practice the ministry required of them. It means that the church should not be content with the status quo of penal policy, with the pronouncements and current expedient policies of politicians who want votes and power. It means that the church could encourage the SPS to further develop its penal policy in such a way as to be of positive benefit to those who are imprisoned and criticising it where its effects are negative. Finally, faithfulness to Jesus Christ must involve the church and its chaplains in prison making a firm and active commitment to justice, integrity, forgiveness, love and all the values of God's vision for the world.



## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **CONCLUSION**

Since the 19th century, the role of the prison chaplain has undergone much change. From a position of power and influence in the 19th century, it has gradually become a role which, although still protected by statute, is marginal within the prison system. However, this is not to suggest that the past role of the prison chaplain could or should be restored today. Chaplains in the past were representatives of state and ecclesiastical power and perpetuated a penal philosophy and practice which was frequently coercive and inhumane.

It has been demonstrated in this thesis that over the years, the ministry of chaplains seems to have been both priestly and pastoral but with the introduction and growth of specialist disciplines in the prison system and the decline of the churches' influence in society, their traditional status and responsibilities changed fairly dramatically. My evidence suggests that many chaplains find their present status and limited influence very difficult to come to terms with, although it is clear that they have continued to practice a traditional priestly and pastoral role. The current position seems to be one in which chaplains are increasingly offering this ministry to a minority of religiously-minded prisoners. They experience varying degrees of role confusion and the chaplaincy function in the prison system is not clearly directed, organised and administered as well as it could be.

In the light of my empirical investigation, I have suggested in this thesis that chaplains should practise a model of ministry which offers holistic pastoral care which is inherently prophetic, and that this should be a ministry offered to

everyone in the Scottish prison system but particularly to prisoners. This model includes a stronger advocacy role for chaplains and is one which could go some way to reducing the denominational segregation and rivalry which currently exists within some chaplaincy teams and in the churches. It is a model of ministry which, if practised, has the potential to exercise positive power and influence in the penal system but not the power and influence associated with the role of chaplains in the past. The power I am suggesting is the power to give, support and nurture people. It is power exercised with responsibility. It is about partnership and co-operation, about enabling and encouraging others, engaging in non-aggressive confrontation (when the need arises), negotiation and conflict resolution; it is about influencing the process of individual and cultural transformation within the penal system. (see further Wink 1994:45 - 49)

Nevertheless it is clear from the research that much attitudinal and practical change would have to take place before the kind of ministry I advocate becomes a reality and it is only realistic to acknowledge that bringing about change of the kind I propose must be problematic and lengthy given the current situation. There are considerable obstacles to be overcome - but change is possible. As far as the SPS is concerned, it seems clear that whereas they may wish to 'professionalise' the work of chaplains more and integrate the chaplaincy function more effectively into the SPS management structure, from the evidence available, they are largely content with the status quo in terms of the limited duties and functions which chaplains undertake. They are therefore unlikely to want to embrace wholeheartedly the enhanced model of ministry I am advocating which could seem inconsistent with integration.

The research indicates that in the case of the churches, prison chaplaincy is regarded as a somewhat marginal ministry and they have demonstrated that there are other priorities and commitments which they regard as more important and pressing. The JPCB is also resisting any change to its role in the SPS. Both the churches and the JPCB also seem content to maintain the status quo with regard to prison ministry and may find the model of ministry I am advocating too much for them to embrace. An holistic pastoral care with an inherent prophetic element however, could hardly be regarded as a revolutionary proposal for prison ministry. What I am advocating is the practice of an authentic and proper pastoral care rather than the practice of a limited and rather unliberating one. Finally, it is evident that prison chaplains, both full-time and part-time, partly because of the way in which they were selected and recruited are unlikely to embrace some of the proposals I am making. In the light of this current situation therefore, it could be argued that the changes to the current practice of chaplains which I am suggesting could be regarded as somewhat utopian. They are not.

Given the problems highlighted in the research, the role confusion about chaplaincy that currently exists amongst all the parties who were interviewed and the pressure of conflicting demands and expectations in relation to chaplaincy work, it would be rather short-sighted if the SPS, the churches and chaplains felt that there was now no necessity for change. I wish to suggest therefore that chaplains, the SPS and the churches should consider involving themselves in rigorous reflection, debate and discussion about the theoretical basis of prison chaplaincy and how this can inform the practice of prison ministry in terms of the role and function of chaplains in the prison system. Consideration should also be given to the role of the churches in relation to the prison system and how best it can support prison chaplaincy. In such a

consultation, it has to be acknowledged that all parties involved will want to protect their own positions and there will need to be tolerance, negotiation and compromise. Such a process should ideally result in the publication of a comprehensive policy document on prison chaplaincy which sets out clear policy and guidelines for practice. I would argue that in the recent past, chaplaincy strategic plans were devised with no cohesive chaplaincy policy and practice guidelines in place and with scant reference to/or consultation with chaplains, the churches and other prison staff and so joint deliberations between all interested parties of the kind I suggest would seem appropriate.

Arising out of my analysis therefore, I put forward the following normative conclusions. There seems little doubt that prison chaplaincy in the Scottish prison system is in a state of crisis and that reforms are urgently required. My research has demonstrated the depth of this crisis. The churches, their chaplains and management in the SPS have limited its function to religious observances and offering a limited pastoral care. This has led to the ongoing denial of a proper pastoral care - a pastoral care which is absolutely intrinsic to ministry. Uncertainty about the chaplains' role, the current lack of direction and vision in chaplaincy at a national level and the minimal involvement and support by the churches in the work of chaplains, are not simply matters of concern for individual chaplains but adversely affects the humane and effective functioning of the prison system. In the thesis, I also demonstrate the problems of exercising an authentic Christian ministry over a period of time in present circumstances. It is clearly not the function of this thesis to propose a normative model for the future practice of chaplains in Scottish prisons. Although the thesis neither includes solutions to all the problems and issues which the research has raised, nor a detailed set of policy recommendations, a

series of proposals which would, in my view, lead to a considerable improvement in the current situation, are set out in Appendix Five.

## **APPENDIX ONE**

### **GLOSSARY OF ESTABLISHMENTS**

**Aberdeen:** Local untried prisoners, male and female, of all ages; local adult convicted male prisoners with sentences of less than four years and women with sentences of up to two years; Training for Freedom hostel. Capacity - 142.

**Barlinnie** (Glasgow): Local untried adult male prisoners; local prisoners with sentences of less than four years. Capacity - 939.

**Castle Huntly** (near Dundee): Category D adult male prisoners with sentences of two years or less who meet the criteria for open conditions. Capacity - 144.

**Cornton Vale** (near Stirling): All categories of women prisoners. In 1996, Category D male young offenders will be held in separate accommodation. Capacity - 172.

**Dumfries:** Local untried prisoners, male and female. Convicted women with sentences of up to two years. Capacity - 46.

**Dungavel** (near Strathaven, Lanarkshire): Category D adult male prisoners who meet the criteria for open conditions. Capacity - 135.

**Edinburgh:** Local untried prisoners of all ages; local adult male prisoners with sentences of less than four years; 'Top End' facilities for long term category C and D prisoners; Training for Freedom hostel. Capacity - 511.

**Friarton** (Perth): Convicted category C and D adult male prisoners with sentences of up to two years. Capacity - 56.

**Glenochil** (near Alloa, Stirlingshire): Adult male prisoners with sentences of four years or more. Capacity - 492.

**Greenock:** Local untried male prisoners of all ages; local adult male prisoners with sentences of less than four years; 'Top End' facilities for category C and D long-term adult males. Capacity - 232.

**Inverness:** Local untried prisoners, male and female, of all ages; adult male prisoners with sentences of less than four years. Women with sentences of up to two years. Capacity - 104.



**Low Moss** (Bishopbriggs, near Glasgow): Category C or D adult male prisoners with sentences mainly of up to one year. Capacity - 396.

**Noranside** (near Forfar): Category D adult male prisoners who meet the criteria for open conditions. Capacity - 135.

**Penninghame** (near Newton Stewart, Dumfries and Galloway): Long-term category D adult male prisoners who meet the criteria for open conditions. Capacity - 85.

**Perth:** Local untried male prisoners of all ages; local adult male prisoners with sentences of less than four years; adult male prisoners with sentences of four years or more; a unit for difficult prisoners. Capacity - 426.

**Peterhead:** Adult male prisoners with sentences of four years and over requiring protection; predominantly those convicted of a sexually motivated offence. Capacity - 216.

**Peterhead Unit:** Adult male prisoners unable to cope with mainstream prison life. Capacity - 10.

**Shotts** (Lanarkshire): Adult male prisoners, with sentences of four years or more. Capacity - 463.

**National Induction Centre, Shotts:** Adult male prisoners sentenced to ten years or more, for the first six to twelve months of their sentences. Capacity - 55.

**Shotts Unit:** Adult male prisoners unable to cope with mainstream prison life. Capacity - 12.

## **YOUNG OFFENDERS INSTITUTIONS**

**Cornton Vale:** All female young offenders. Capacity - 41.

**Dumfries:** Male young offenders with sentences of four years or more; female young offenders with sentences of up to two years. Capacity - 93.

**Glenochil:** Male young offenders with sentences of less than one year. Capacity - 171.

**Polmont** (near Falkirk): Convicted male young offenders (other than those assessed as high security risks): Training for Freedom hostel (which in 1996 changed from housing Category D male young offenders to Category D women.) Capacity - 420.

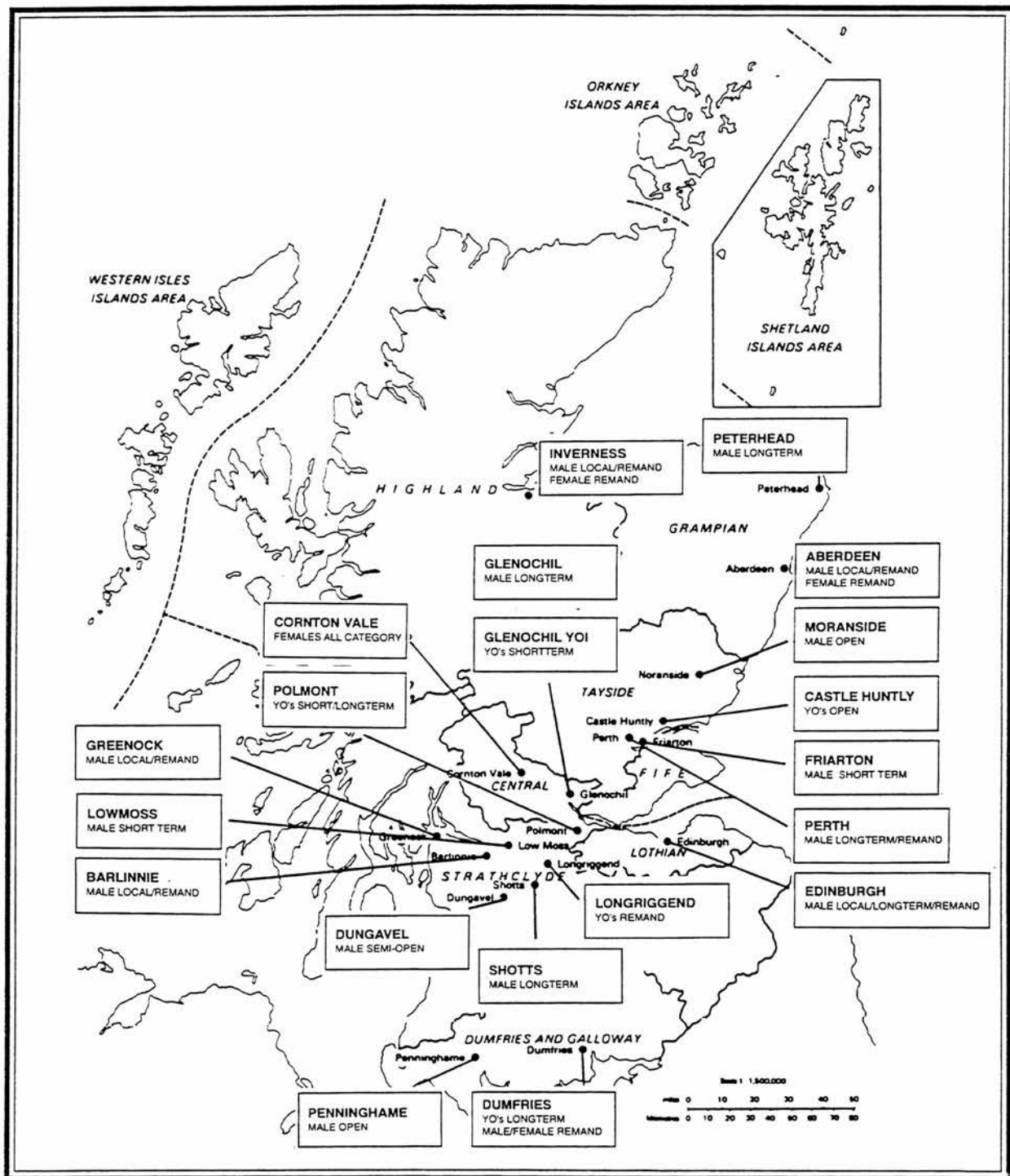
### **Remand Institution**

**Longriggend** (near Airdrie): Under 21 males remanded for trial from the courts, mainly in the West of Scotland. Capacity - 177.

Source: The Scottish Office 1996

## **APPENDIX TWO**

### **LOCATION OF PENAL ESTABLISHMENTS**



## **APPENDIX THREE**

### **LETTER TO CHAPLAINS ACCOMPANYING POSTAL SURVEY**



DEPARTMENT of CHRISTIAN ETHICS  
and PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

The University of Edinburgh  
New College  
Mound Place  
Edinburgh EH1 2LX

Fax 0131 650 6579

Telephone 0131 650 8921

direct line 0131 650

7 February 1995

Dear Chaplain,

My name is Hilary Smith. I have been involved in prison chaplaincy for many years and have worked as a prison chaplain at HM Prison Edinburgh. I am now working part time for New College, the University of Edinburgh, as Development Officer.

I am also undertaking a PhD. in the Department of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology on the work of the prison chaplain and I write to ask if you would be willing to help with this project. I enclose a postal questionnaire concerned with the work of the prison chaplain which I hope that you will answer. I would be grateful if you could return the completed questionnaire as soon as possible but in any case, no later than 1 March 1995. A first class stamped addressed envelope is enclosed for your use. It should take you no more than half an hour to complete the questionnaire.

I give you an undertaking that your answers will be treated in confidence. It is my intention later to conduct a series of interviews with a small sample of chaplains to explore some topics in greater depth. Interviews will not be written up in a way that identifies you. I would be obliged if you would indicate your willingness to take part. There is an opportunity to do this at the end of the questionnaire.

I hope that you do not mind that I have sent this letter and accompanying questionnaire to your home address but I know how busy you are in the prison and how time is precious there and I thought that this might be more convenient for you.

Thank you for your time and help. It is very much appreciated.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

  
Hilary Smith

## **APPENDIX FOUR**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE: THE WORK OF THE PRISON CHAPLAIN**



Name the prison where you work: \_\_\_\_\_

## Why did you decide to become a prison chaplain?

tick one box for each line

	Yes	No
You were encouraged towards prison chaplaincy by your denomination? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
You were appointed as prison chaplain by your denominational church authority? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Through hearing about the work from a colleague? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Through experience of pastoral work with offenders/ex-offenders and/or their families? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Through a specific desire to be a prison chaplain? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## Consider the following models of prison ministry. How well do each of these models describe your ministry?

tick one box for each model

	Very well	To some extent	Not at all
<b>MODEL A:</b> A prison chaplain holds a unique place within the prison, being in the prison but not of it. He/she represents a different order, is an amateur among professionals, and is considered by many to be rather disarming and naive in approach.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<b>MODEL B:</b> A prison chaplain is the independent representative of God and of the wider church in the prison and gives most importance to preaching the Word of God and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, the administration of the sacraments and through bible study.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<b>MODEL C:</b> A prison chaplain is available as and when required, responding to requests from prisoners and holding a neutral position within the prison establishment. The chaplain has little involvement in the routine of the prison.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<b>MODEL D:</b> A prison chaplain maintains a critical distance from the power structures of the prison system and is thus able to reflect upon it, to become an advocate for prisoners and work for positive individual and institutional improvement/change in the prison system.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<b>MODEL E:</b> A prison chaplain is, primarily, a giver of care, demonstrating this through the specific functions of listening, visiting, caring and counselling with prisoners and/or staff, whether believers or not.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<b>MODEL F:</b> A prison chaplain is an interpreter of the prison system for prisoners. He/she is a normalising influence, helping prisoners to come to terms with their imprisonment and explaining the ways of the institution to them. He/she tries to ensure a degree of social stability within the prison.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

**Which one of the models of ministry detailed on the previous page most accurately describes your ministry in prison?**

*tick one box only*

Model A _____	<div>1</div>	Model D _____	<div>4</div>
Model B _____	<div>2</div>	Model E _____	<div>5</div>
Model C _____	<div>3</div>	Model F _____	<div>6</div>

**Of these models, please indicate the extent to which you aspire to these models.**

*tick one box for each model*

	A great deal	To some extent	Not at all
Model A _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div>
Model B _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div>
Model C _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div>
Model D _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div>
Model E _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div>
Model F _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div>

**Of these models, which model do you aspire to most?**

*tick one box only*

Model A _____	<div>1</div>	Model D _____	<div>4</div>
Model B _____	<div>2</div>	Model E _____	<div>5</div>
Model C _____	<div>3</div>	Model F _____	<div>6</div>

**What factors mitigate against this aspiration?**

*tick one box for each line*

	Yes	No
The Prison Rules 1994 mitigate against this aspiration _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
The Operating Standards mitigate against this aspiration _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
You do not have time to practise this model _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
You are restricted by religious convention _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
You do not feel confident enough to practise this model _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
You have never thought about practising this model _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Your congregation would disapprove _____	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>

**How important do you feel it is that you visit prisoners of your own particular denomination as soon as possible after their reception into prison?**

*tick one box only*

Very important _____	<div>1</div>
Fairly important _____	<div>2</div>
Somewhat important _____	<div>3</div>
Not important at all _____	<div>4</div>

**How important do you feel it is that the majority of your working time as a chaplain is spent with prisoners of your own particular denomination?**

*tick one box only*

Very important _____	<div>1</div>
Fairly important _____	<div>2</div>
Somewhat important _____	<div>3</div>
Not important at all _____	<div>4</div>

**In relation to current penal policy, what is your view of each of the following?***tick one box for each line*

	Strongly approve	Approve	Evenly divided	Dis- approve	Strongly disapprove	No opinion
Prison Rules 1994 _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Statement of Charter Standards for Prisoners _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sentence Planning Policy _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
The chaplain as specialist within the SPS _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Operating Standards _____	1	2	3	4	5	6
Directions _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

**Do you think that chaplains should make routine visits for the purpose of offering religious ministration to the following?***tick one box for each line*

	Yes	No
Prisoners who are sick _____	1	2
Prisoners confined to cells _____	1	2
Prisoners under punishment _____	1	2
Prisoners in segregation _____	1	2
Prisoners of no religious denomination or persuasion _____	1	2

**Do you consider that you are chaplain to...***tick one box only*

...prisoners and staff? _____	1
...prisoners? _____	2
...prisoners belonging to your denomination? _____	3
...staff? _____	4
...the Institution as a whole? _____	5

**Are you involved in any of the following groups and/or committees in the prison where you work?***tick one box for each line*

	Yes	No
Medical Review Board _____	1	2
Prisoners Grievance Panel _____	1	2
Interdisciplinary Committee _____	1	2
Samaritans _____	1	2
Therapeutic groups _____	1	2
Staff training _____	1	2
Heads of Department meeting _____	1	2
Team Briefing _____	1	2
Prison Visiting Scheme _____	1	2
Race Relations _____	1	2
Regime Services meeting _____	1	2
Local Review Committee _____	1	2
Visiting Committee _____	1	2

**Other (please specify)**

\_\_\_\_\_

It may be that you take part in a number of other activities related to your prison ministry, both inside and outside the establishment. Which of the following are you involved in? Please give examples of your involvement where appropriate.

tick one box for each activity

	Yes	No
Facilitating churches in developing their own local responses to and resources for prisoners and ex-prisoners.	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		
Liaising with parish clergy over particular pastoral support for prisoners.	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		
Advocacy and speaking up for prisoners where and when you feel this to be necessary.	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		
Trying to encourage awareness in local churches about the nature and needs of those who are imprisoned.	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		
Taking part in the life of penal reform and after-care agencies for ex-offenders and their families.	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		
Training chaplains, lay workers and members of staff for work with prisoners and ex-prisoners.	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		
Visiting ex-prisoners and/or prisoner's families and working with them in support groups or on an individual basis.	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		
Contributing to the continuing debate on Scottish penal policy .	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		
Attending conferences on penal matters.	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		
Writing parole/annual review reports on prisoners.	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
Example: _____		

How often would you meet with your Line/Unit Manager?  
tick one box only

Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Fortnightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

(please specify)

If you do meet with your Line/Unit Manager, what topics would you discuss with him/her?  
tick one box for each line

	Yes	No
Chapel Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative matters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prison Conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prisoners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arranging chaplaincy programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Security matters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

How often would you meet with the Governor of the establishment where you work?  
tick one box only

Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Fortnightly	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	4


(please specify)

If you do meet with the Governor, what topics would you discuss with him/her?  
tick one box for each line

	Yes	No
Chapel Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative matters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prison conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prisoners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arranging chaplaincy programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Security matters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

Do you carry/use a cell and/or pass key?  
tick one box only




YES

1

NO

2



if NO, please go to  
Question 21 below

If YES: do you find carrying/using a pass and/or cell key...  
tick one box for each line

	Yes	No
...aids movement inside the prison?	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
...gives better access to individual prisoners?	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
...gives a degree of independence?	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
...aids time management?	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>

Other (please specify)

If NO: do you not carry/use a pass and/or cell key because...  
tick one box for each line

	Yes	No
...it is not allowed by your establishment?	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
...you feel that it may inhibit your ministry with prisoners?	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>
...it makes you feel vulnerable?	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div>

Other (please specify)

Are you a full-time or part-time chaplain?

tick one box only

Full-time	<div>1</div>
Part-time	<div>2</div>

If you are a part-time chaplain, do you also work as...

tick one box only

...a parish minister?	<div>1</div>
...a deacon/ess?	<div>2</div>
...an assistant or associate minister?	<div>3</div>
...a nun?	<div>4</div>

Other (please specify)

What is your length of service as a prison chaplain?

\_\_\_\_\_ years

What is your present denomination?

tick one box only

Church of Scotland	<div>1</div>
Episcopal	<div>2</div>
Roman Catholic	<div>3</div>

How many hours do you work in the prison each week?

tick one box only

1 - 6 hours	<div>1</div>
7 - 11 hours	<div>2</div>
12 - 15 hours	<div>3</div>
over 15 hours each week	<div>4</div>

If you work in parish ministry, how many years have you been in the ministry?

\_\_\_\_\_ years

What sex are you?

tick one box only

Male	<div>1</div>
Female	<div>2</div>

What is your age?

\_\_\_\_\_ years

Within the following categories, which best describes your theological position?

tick one box only

Fundamentalist	<div>1</div>	catholic	<div>6</div>
Evangelical	<div>2</div>	High Church	<div>7</div>
Charismatic	<div>3</div>	High Church Conservative	<div>8</div>
Conservative	<div>4</div>	High Church Liberal	<div>9</div>
Liberal	<div>5</div>	Other (please specify)	



# Thank you for your co-operation

---

Would you be willing to be interviewed?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

1
2

If YES: please add your name, address and telephone number below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX FIVE**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **The role of the prison chaplain:** The role of the prison chaplain should be reviewed and redefined so that the emphasis is on an holistic form of ministry which includes strong pastoral and prophetic elements. A revised job description should be written for prison chaplains which includes a commitment to developing ministry to the whole penal system rather than to a minority of religiously-minded prisoners within that system.

2. **The role of the JPCB:** The membership and remit of the JPCB should be reviewed and either extended or replaced with members who represent a variety of denominations and faiths, and who are supported by the SPS and the churches. The remit should be a different one from the previous remit of the JPCB and it should work towards providing stronger links with churches on the outside.

3. **The full-time chaplains:** The job description of the two full-time national chaplains should be reviewed and revised. The role should be an enhanced one, embodying vision, purpose and clear direction.

4. **Recruitment:** The current recruitment policy of chaplains should be reviewed and revised so that appointments are not made on a purely denominational basis but on securing the best person for the vacancy whatever their denomination and whether they be lay, licensed, deaconed or ordained. Governors of establishments should have a greater input into the recruitment procedure for chaplains in their respective establishments.

5. **Part-time ministry:** A revision of the allocation of hours worked by chaplains in establishments should be undertaken. It would seem appropriate to

suggest that fewer chaplains work in establishments, but that they work for more hours each week. It seems clear from the research that in order to offer a continuously effective ministry and to become more involved in the life of penal establishments, no chaplain should be working in an establishment for anything less than seven/eight hours each week.

6. **Training:** As well as attending induction training, already carried out by local SPS Training Officers, there should be compulsory initial training for all new chaplains within four to six weeks of their appointment followed by an assessment of their work after three months and six months - in effect - a probationary period. There should also be an ongoing training programme for all serving chaplains which includes familiarisation with current penal policy and practice.

7. **Teamwork:** Whilst recognising that chaplains already work in teams in some establishments, chaplains in all establishments should be encouraged and enabled to work in teams.

8. **Communication:** A review of the system of communication between chaplains and governors, between chaplains and the full-time chaplains, between the full-time chaplains and the SPS, between the JPCB and the chaplains and between the SPS, chaplains, the JPCB and the churches should be undertaken.

9. **Carrying of keys:** In view of the general view expressed by prisoners in the focus groups, the carrying of keys by chaplains should be reviewed, particularly the use of cell keys.

10. **Budgetary considerations:** The SPS and the churches should offer a realistic financial budget to ensure the development of a chaplaincy service which offers best practice within a professional Scottish prison service.

11. **Policy document:** A comprehensive policy document should be produced which includes a theoretical analysis of prison ministry which can inform practice. It should offer clear policy and practice guidelines for prison chaplaincy in the SPS.

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